

# A PASSING PHASE OF POLITICS

BY

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*Editor Kesari & Leader of the Swarajya  
Party in Maharashtra*

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## *THE PUBLISHER'S FOREWORD*

Politics in India, like so many other things, is in a passing condition. Non Co-operation a grand movement though it is in theory, has unfortunately to fall for the moment under that category. The history of the movement we thought, was faithfully reflected in the writings of Mr N C KELKAR, Editor KESARI and the leader of the Maharashtra Swarajya Party. We accordingly approached Mr KELKAR for permission to publish them in book form and we feel grateful to him for according the necessary permission and writing a foreword to the book.

We intend to follow up this book with another in which will be stated the genuine view of Maharashtra on a vast variety of public questions through the pen, as far as possible, of the best available exponents throughout Maharashtra. We hope, therefore, that the public will extend their patronage to us in this undertaking.

POONA }  
1-5-1925 }

S W AWATI

## FOREWORD

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I appreciate the compliment which my publisher Mr. AWATI has paid me by issuing to the public the present collection of my writings on Non-co operation, the Council question, and other allied matters. The title he has chosen for the book of course expresses his view of the subject matter. But that view is not perhaps far removed from the truth. Non co operation has certainly been only a passing phase of politics as the publisher's fancy chooses to call it. Non Co-operation has been definitely superseded by the Swarajya Party politics, though I know that even that is not the last word. If I may make a guess, politics in India will before long settle down into the useful and workable mould of Responsive Co-operation.

Of course the public mind has been so obsessed during the last few years by the word Non Co-operation that the word Co-operation is likely to jar on the public ear. But it must be remembered that the word 'Responsive' governs the word 'Co-operation' and brings it, therefore, so much near to its exact opposite as hardly to be distinguishable from the other. Responsive Co-operation necessarily assumes that Co-operation is to be offered only when Government by their political attitude make this country safe for Co-operation. This golden age must evidently be coming and, therefore, the normal condition of things be almost in the nature of Non-co-operation,

however, as an equivalent of obstruction offered not for its own sake but with the ulterior purpose of putting a uniform and tight pressure upon Government. Co-operation and Non-co-operation are the two polar points of political policy between which the movements of the non-official Indian world would be regulated by or answer to the shifting of the shuttle of official initiative. If Government wanted our co-operation why they can have it they can command it provided they satisfy the political leaders of India that they are in earnest about inaugurating such or very nearly such self-Governments as people want demand. But if on the other hand their intention be only to play the petty fogging huckster they can have nothing but non-co-operation in the sense expressed above.

The reason why Lok Tilak used the word co-operation rather than non-co-operation when he coined that phrase at Gaugapore on his way to the Amritsar Congress, is very obvious. The atmosphere was expectant or optimistic in the matter of political reforms. And though the Punjab atrocities were already there and though the Congress was even in the matter of Reforms inclined to be severely critical yet there was the patent belief that something was really coming. And it was because M. Gandhi himself was anxious to give that something a cordial welcome and a fair chance of life that he insisted upon the Congress giving a mandate to the country to work the reforms such as they were. And thus he did even at the risk of expressing his dark suspicion that though Tilak used the word Responsive Co-operation he did it only with a view not to be out of tune with the ring of the atmosphere but without at the same time, meaning or expecting that he had before him an era of co-operation on either side. In one word M. Gandhi himself interpreted Tilak's Responsive Co-opera-

tion as something like Non-co-operation. As fates would, have it M. Gandhi himself soon came forward to openly and gushingly advocate what he suspected Tilak to be only secretly conceiving.

Well, all this led to a hopeless confusion in the public mind about the use of the words Non-co-operation and Responsive Co-operation. But let us see if the country does not really come back to Responsive Co-operation without being afraid of the word Co-operation, now that the N. C. O. politics has really proved but a 'passing phase' as the publisher calls it.

As for myself I would ask the reader to carefully read the following pages if he really wants to judge me fairly in the present welter of political psychology. I would venture to give him only one or two broad clues. Thus at page fifteen at the end he will find that my very first article, written immediately after the Special Congress at Calcutta in 1920, concludes with the following words.—"We frankly stick to our opinion that the Congress resolution is most unfortunate, both in its scope and wording, and we reserve to ourselves the fullest and the freest right to get it modified in future." And if after that I joined the N. C. O. ranks it was with a mental reservation which I had thus avowed and about which I had given my opponents a clear warning. Then again readers will find that in my statement before the Civil Disobedience Enquiry Committee I proved that Responsive Co-operation and Responsive Non-co-operation were practically the same thing, owing to the virtue of the magical word 'responsive.' I said nothing more was necessary than to change the name of the Political Movement of the Congress from mere N. C. O. to Responsive N. C. O. In my cross-examination I argued my faith in the Council work as one of the political weapons of the country, and I bluntly



told the Committee that the country must go back to Amritsar, that is to say to take up the threads where they were left at the Amritsar Congress. The words "Responsive Co-operation do not occur in the resolutions of that Congress. But the spirit is unmistakably there. The resolutions of the I N Congresses held from 1920 to 1924 do not present any coherent or consistent view on political reforms and My suggestion evidently appeared somewhat crude to the C D Committee at the time. But the policy shaped by the Swarajya Party during the last two years and eventually approved by M. Gandhi though with certain mental reservations obviously intended to cover a graceful retreat is none other but the policy outlined in the Amritsar Congress.

My statement as to Non Co-operation and Responsive Co-operation being nearly the same may sound rather too subtle. But the following quotation from the speech of Mr. C. R. Das at Poona after the establishment of the Swarajya Party at Gaya will make it clear that Mr. Das also takes the same view.

To put this important matter beyond all doubt I give a few exact quotations from my own speech as well as the speech of Mr. Das in the Shivaji Mandir Poona on 4th February 1923.

This is what I said —

"I therefore repeat that I am not to be put out by being called an advocate of Responsive Co-Operation for it really means as it meant three years ago obstruction in the Councils to the fullest degree or measure necessary for the purpose of a speedy achievement of full responsible Self Government. Nor can I be frightened by his speaking exclusively in terms of deadlocks and breakdowns. For in the main he and I mean one common policy of contesting the elections, capturing

the seats, entering the Councils, taking the oath, trying to secure a majority, presenting well formulated demands to Government, offering them co operation in the event of granting most of them, and in the case of their failure to do so to use the seats in the Councils for nothing but continuous and consistent obstruction to Government in such manner as the New party may determine, or the Congress may advice at the proper time, supposing the Congress could be persuaded to enter into our spirit and accept our views. In the meanwhile Mr Das and myself will go on pushing the cause and the propaganda of the New Party, with the same freedom and same agreement that we now claim and possess. Further, we shall both strenuously resist the forceful as well as the wily attempts of our opponents to separate us, claiming that the grammar of assent, which may apply to our differences of views in the New Party shall not be different from the grammar by which the position of the different groups in the No-Clange party must also be judged."

This is what Mr Das said —

' And there has been much talk about Responsive-Co-operation, Responsive non Co operation, Satyagrahic Non-Co-operation and all that. But I do not take my stand upon phrases. As a matter of fact there is no difference between my idea of work in the Councils and Responsive Co-Operation or Mr Kelkar's Responsive Non Co operation. I want the spirit of resistance behind the whole movement. I appeal to people not to be carried away by catch phrases but I ask them to take their stand upon truth.

"I say we have not begun to Non Co-operate as yet, we are simply preparing for it as Nagpur Congress Resolution says. We are feeding the Government by taxes and unless we stop that there is no real Non-Co-operation. As to Councils.

I think my plan is very simple. In entering the Councils we do not abandon Non Co-operation. I say it is a step in advance. We shall put forward after capturing seats the most Moderate scheme of Swarajya for acceptance by Government. If it is granted all right if not We shall use all machinery of obstruction provided by the Councils and I think Mr. Kelkar's Responsive Non Co operation is nothing else than this.

"I am a dreamer no doubt but my dreams are not confined to dogmas and doctrines. I dream the dream of Swarajya. I want to see something achieved in my life time. Do you think that the collection of 25 lacs of Rs. and enrolment of 50 000 volunteers will bring you Swarajya ? ( Cries of No No ) Then there is no course open to you except the programme of the new party. I do not know what will be constructed by the so-called Constructive programme of spinning and weaving. Some people contend that the bureaucracy will carry on the Government by votes and certifications. I say the power of resistance of people which compelled the British Government to grant the Reforms of 1919 will prevent the Government from taking them away. If reforms are so withdrawn then that is the beginning of regular and complete Non Co operation.

With these words I leave the book to the tender mercy of both friend and foe.

Poona 23rd April 1925 ]

N C KELKAR

# A PASSING PHASE OF POLITICS

## WHAT IS PASSIVE RESISTANCE\*

No one who had taken a part in or even closely followed, current politics during the last few years, would raise the question of a definition of Passive Resistance. It was only in 1913 or four years ago that Mr M K Gandhi together with hundreds of his Indian followers in South Africa, entered into a struggle of Passive Resistance against the South African Government and the word Passive Resistance was then bandied from one end of this country to another by the entire body of politicians and publicists supported by officials including the Viceroy himself. It is difficult to imagine that the word Passive Resistance being then used by all these people without its meaning being understood. But I have no hesitation in attempting a definition and explanation of this term Passive Resistance if it is likely to remove any cobwebs of real or assumed ignorance about its nature.

Passive Resistance means a resisting response offered, by way either of an action or forbearance, to an extraneous stimulus in the nature of an unjust command or the operation of an unjust law or rule of law.

A popular definition of Passive Resistance was given by the late Hon Mr Gokhale in his speech on the subject of "Indians in the Transvaal" delivered at the Town Hall Meeting at Bombay on the 9th September 1909 —

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\* [ Sarvajanic Sabha quarterly journal 1918 ]

"What is this passive resistance?" he asked. And he supplied his own answer as follows — "passive resistance is resistance to an unjust law or an oppressive measure and a refusal to acquiesce in that law or measure and a readiness to suffer the penalty instead, which may be prescribed as an alternative" Mr M K Gandhi also once gave a definition of passive resistance while lecturing before the Jermiston Literary and Debating Society. He defined it by the simple word 'Soul force', and he mentioned Jesus Christ, Daniel and Socrates as instances representing the purest form of passive resistance.

Passive resistance is in one sense a contradiction in terms. For, while the word passive denotes the absence of all tendency to resist though it is coupled with the word resistance itself. Passive Resistance would literally mean suffering resistance. But both the words have apparently their own use. For while, the word 'resistance' indicates the end, the word 'passive' indicates the nature of the means by which that end is to be achieved. The passive resister does decidedly intend to offer resistance, but he does not intend by that resistance to cause injury or suffering to any one except perhaps himself.

Though passive resistance must certainly be contrasted with active resistance or the use of physical force still it is not necessarily exclusive of a positive action. Whether the act of passive resistance will be negative, will entirely depend upon the nature, positive or negative, of the command or rule of law which may have to be opposed. Thus when an unjust tax is levied the act of passive resistance would be negative i.e., the non payment of the tax. But when on the other hand the law prescribes a prohibition or a negative injunction against a particular act being done in a particular manner, then the act of passive resistance would have to be

positive as happened in the case of Mr Gandhi and the other passive resisters in South Africa, who committed the positive act of entering into the<sup>1</sup> Transval without conforming to the particular conditions prescribed for being lawfully in that country

Passive resistance, if it is to be used in this country in practical politics, will certainly have, under certain circumstances to amount to or even take the actual form of disobedience to law or lawful authority. But this disobedience would be largely limited or conditioned, for it will practically be disregarding only one particular provision of the whole Penal Law, viz, that which makes it penal to disobey a lawfully promulgated order. An Indian passive resister will not have taken an attitude of opposition to or disregard of the Penal Law in general. He would not be contemplating any offence against the State or the person or property of any individual. He would be concerned only under particular conditions, with what is ordinarily the duty of a law abiding citizen viz, to obey orders lawfully promulgated. But there must be a limit to this kind of law abidingness. For an order of law, though duly and legally promulgated, may really be unjust, or inequitable and may sometimes be even inconsistent with the merest self respect. The moral duty of a citizen under these circumstances would stand up opposed to his legal duty, and provided a man is prepared to suffer the consequences of his disobedience it has been recognized as permissible to him to practise that disobedience. Theoretically there is nothing which Government does that is not in the nature or in pursuance of the lawful authority vested in it. And if the doctrine of passive obedience to law were held to be inviolable under any conceivable condition the term passive resistance would not have been even heard of. Mr Gandhi did not pretend that the Transvaal

Ordinance was not a duly or legally promulgated order or rule of law. But he regarded the ordinance as entirely inconsistent with his self respect as a British citizen and he decided simply to disobey it, as that might be after all the best means to cure the legal malady in the Transvaal State and vindicate his own position as such citizen.

As the late Hon. Mr. Gokhale has observed "If we strongly and clearly and conscientiously feel the grave injustice of a law and there is no other way to obtain redress I think refusal to acquiesce in it taking the consequences of such refusal, is the only course left to those who place conscience and self-respect above their material or immediate interests. Also as the Lord Bishop of Madras speaking at a meeting of the citizens of Madras held to express thanks to H. E. Lord Hardinge for his pronouncement on the South African question said, "But there is such a thing as tyranny masquerading under the forms of law and when that is unhappily the case resistance to law becomes not a crime but a virtue."

Confronted with the example of the case of passive resistance in South Africa some people try to get out of it by arguing that India is not South Africa. If the principle underlying that dictum were strictly to be applied in every case then the well known proof of parallelism or analogy will have entirely to be given the go-by. The absence of identity, resulting in a necessary variation of conditions is a factor which can never be completely got over. That A is not B is a fairly enough correct proposition in itself. But if that were sought to be strictly applied to the practical affairs of the world, then the great body of the teaching of history, in fact the whole body of human experience would be nugatory. India may not be South Africa, but the Gandhi of 1917 is obviously the Gandhi of 1913, and he has already proved that it is so by the successful bit of passive resistance which

he offered to the Behar Government in the matter of the Champaran inquiry. And those who advocate the principle of passive resistance go on the supposition that those Indian people who loudly applauded Mr. Gandhi and his passive resisting companions in 1913 are the same and have not changed their principles in the blessed year 1917.

It is usual to interpret Swadeshism, Boycott of British Goods, resignations of posts of honour or emoluments under Government and generally suspension of all co-operation with Government as forms of passive resistance. But strictly speaking they are not. They may be certainly concurrent or co-ordinating acts of expressing displeasure with Government action, but they are not strictly acts of passive resistance, for the obvious reason, that they do not constitute a resistance to any acts of compulsion proceeding from Government. Thus, for instance, it is ludicrous for one to say that he would begin to buy Swadeshi goods if Government were to do such and such a thing, as if it was not already and otherwise his duty to his country to buy home-made goods. The Boycott is only a more open and accentuated form of Swadeshism. As for resigning posts of emolument under Government, Government never thrust upon any one the duty of rendering paid service to them, and resigning such posts is only practising an option which was equally open at the beginning. As regards honorary posts there is an obvious distinction between one set of them and another, as for example, posts of Honorary Magistrates etc. on the one hand, and membership of the Municipal or Local Board and the Legislative Councils on the other. The one feature common to both these sets is that there is no Government compulsion upon any one to accept any one of them. But whereas the first set of posts denotes a kind of subservience, the other set denotes a kind of independence. We think that though



something could be said on the side of giving up honorary Magistracies, which might come in the way of a citizen exercising his fullest rights of free speech and action in politics, very little can really be said on the side of resigning memberships of the Municipal or Legislative Council etc. For the function exercised by the holders of these posts arises out of their being to that extent, a part and parcel of Government ; and there is no manifest advantage in relinquishing them peacefully. A Municipal or Legislative Councillor does not absolutely suffer in his political work or agitation by being such a councillor. His position imposes absolutely no limitations upon his political activities. On the other hand a political worker or agitator enjoys, if anything, an extraneous advantage by reason of his being such a councillor. To give up posts on the Legislative or Municipal Councils would be, therefore, to give up an advantage won already.

Co-operation with Government is to a certain extent unavoidable for one who is or wants to be a *practical* politician. The only obvious limit to such co-operation is the one laid down by individual self-respect which of course ought never to be sacrificed even by a practical politician.

It is, however, conceivable that Legislative and Municipal Councillors might, on occasions, resign their posts in more or less considerable numbers simultaneously and as a deliberate act of demonstration of resentment against a particular measure of official administration. But that can be only as a temporary measure and as a matter of tactics of obstruction but not as a matter of permanent principle.

I have already said the Passive Resistance will ordinarily consist of disobedience to particular orders or rules of law. But it may be stated that such disobedience is not contemplated to be for its own sake or merely for exhibiting temper. There must be a definite object in disobeying them viz., to

accentuate and visualise the element of injustice lying at their root, and to offer righteous protest against the same

The motive underlying disobedience must be, in my opinion, a simple and not a complex one, *i.e.*, it must relate to the attainment or achievement of a simple definite object, the denial of which would necessarily constitute an act of intolerable injustice.

Passive resistance must have a single simple definite objective, so that there should be no possibility of misunderstanding about the motive of the passive resister. The principle of the isolation of the phenomenon, must be strictly observed about it so that the undivided attention of both the passive resister and his critic should be concentrated upon the particular action. The passive resister is not a person who desperately runs amock, laying his hands upon anything and every thing that may come within his reach, nor should his critic have an excuse for confounding the particular objective which is sought to be achieved by Passive Resistance with any others that the passive resister does not really advert to. Thus the removal of a particular tax or impost, or the cancellation of a particular rule or order can be named and ought to be named in practising passive resistance, so that the critic should be disarmed of the accusation that the resister is only making an exhibition of his general ill temper or petulance or petty mindedness, but must be compelled to admit that the resister is a man of principle whether the principle in the opinion of other people be right or wrong.

Practical politics requires that the objective of the passive practical resister should be such that it may be within the immediate power of the authority concerned to grant redress of or remedy. Thus *e.g.* the cancellation of the order of Mrs Besant's internment would have been a proper objective for the passive resister from this point of view. A mere

stroke of the pen on the part of Lord Pentland could unmake it as it had made it. But on the other hand the Congress—Scheme, that is to say, the whole scheme and nothing but the scheme cannot very well be a proper objective for passive resistance from the same point of view. For it is inconceivable that even assuming that the Government were in a mood to grant Self Government to India, Government could issue a decree embodying the grant of the Congress—Scheme of Self-Government without altering even a single detail in it for better or for worse. The Congress—Scheme of reforms will have to be taken in the spirit and not in the letter even by Congressmen themselves. When men say that the Congress—Scheme embodies the minimum of our demands, it only means that we have in our minds an abstract standard of effective popular control over the administration to which any scheme of reforms offered by Government, if it is to be acceptable, must roughly approximate. Much more unreasonable would it be to proclaim passive resistance for attaining "Self-Government" in general. In the first case the Congress—Scheme has at least the merit of giving a vivid outline and the substance of the particular demands one, two, three, four, &c. which we want. But the mere use of the undefined word "Self-Government" is sure to land both the Government and people in a veritable labyrinth of cross purposes, even assuming Government to be in the most generous mood.

The objective of passive resistance should be such that on the side of the people, at any rate, it should prevail an absolute or almost absolute unanimity of opinion as to its merits. To practise passive resistance for an objective which does not comply with that condition, would be to court mere ridicule and consequently want of sympathy. A hotly debated demand, I mean debated among the people themselves, cannot be a proper objective for passive resistance.

As regards the organisation for passive resistance, much would depend upon whether the grievance, complained of, is merely local or general. In the former case the problem of the passive resistance will have to be faced and solved by the homogeneous community of the particular locality. Passive resistance is a thing which will not spread by mere sympathetic contagion. There is such a thing as sympathetic strikes known in European countries, where the labour organization is strong. But the sympathetic or objective strikes are after all neither so extensive nor so deep rooted as the substantive strikes. The total absence of the Boycott movement in certain provinces of India, and the existence of it in only a very mild or tempered form in certain others, when the movement spread like wild fire in Bengal a few years ago, can be explained, only on the supposition that, while the other provinces generally sympathised with the Bengalees and were prepared to fraternise with them, the merits of the grievance of the Partition of Bengal were not as much intellectually perceived elsewhere as they were in Bengal itself. The partition of Bengal was, after all that was said and done, a more or less local grievance. What applies to a local grievance, also applies to a personal grievance and with greater force.

## THE NON CO OPERATION RESOLUTION\*

The Congress Resolution on Non-co-operation has served to disturb the equilibrium in many a quarter. And no wonder. The resolution is a sudden *contre-temps*. No one expected that it would be passed in this form. It is a much mixed up affair in its contents. It satisfies no one not even Mr Gandhi himself. The Moderates who are still within the Congress object to the enunciation of the principle itself of Non co-operation. The bulk of the Nationalist Congressmen are afraid that the details of the Non co-operation programme even as sanctioned by the resolution go too far to be practicable and yet Mr Gandhi made no secret of the fact that he did not like the qualifying word 'gradual' applied to two items in the programme. And as for the boycott of foreign goods Mr Gandhi openly denounced it though it formed an integral part of the resolution proposed by himself! The resolution is thus a queer mosaic. Perhaps the present procedure of the Congress is responsible for it all as it allows the proceedings of the Subjects Committee and the open session to be prolonged indefinitely and *ad nauseam* so that deliberations may be made at leisure and decisions taken in a hurry. It is quite conceivable that the resolution could have been more shipshape and less objectionable if the President had been a little less kind, a little less patient and indulgent to some of our indefatigable orators. Also separate votes taken on some of the items by splitting up propositions and amendments would have given us a better result. As it is the resolution is ponderous unwieldy and undigestable. It is no consolation to say that Mr Pals amendment if bodily passed would have been no

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\* *Mahratta*, Sept. 1920.

better But we all understand that it was entirely due to the exigencies of debate and voting and there is still a fair chance of our reconciling ourselves to the resolution if we do not fly at a tangent or go away in a huff

We must recognise that after all ninety per cent of the congressmen assembled at Calcutta, did want the Congress to give some sort of a practical lead to the nation in the matter of Non-co-operation It is futile to expect that the country could have been satisfied with a bald enunciation of the general principle of Non co-operation Non co operation is supposed to be an active albeit a new and untried method of agitation, and if it must come to a choice of evils as between meaningless platitudinarianism and a programme of which a few details might be unworkable for the moment, we would frankly and unhesitatingly prefer the latter Otherwise the enunciation of the principle of Non co operation would have been an empty paraphrase of the principle of self help and self reliance to the preaching of which we have been already accustomed No doubt, it gives a wrench to our mind to imagine that a resolution of the Congress should eventually be made ridiculous by non execution But it is certainly more profitable to realise the limitations of a practical programme by experience than to indulge in *a priori* maxims and sentimental mysticism The Congress Resolution may not be satisfactory and may prove barren for practical purposes But it is something to have concrete ideas and suggestions in the nature of Non co-operation, if as we are all agreed, no better remedy presents itself to us at this moment

The Moderates naturally are in high glee over what they consider to be a split in the Congress Camp We can assure our friends that nothing of the kind is the matter In any case they are out of it, and even a split in the Congress, as now constituted, would not materially help them Are they not

life cannot exist, much less flourish at any point without some kind of official touch or support. They must entirely depend for any of their activities upon the initiative of Government. Not so the bulk of the Nationalists much less Mr. Gandhi. The triumph at the Calcutta Congress may perhaps be claimed as a triumph of the more advanced section of the Nationalist party as against the less advanced one but certainly it is not a triumph for the Moderate party in any sense.

The one important point on which Mr. Gandhi and other Nationalist leaders radically differed from one another is the boycott of Councils. In this matter Mr. Gandhi has won and we have lost. We regret the decision as depriving the Nationalists for at least three years more of the use of an effective lever of constitutional agitation outside the constituted official bodies but we feel that notwithstanding our regret we must loyally abide by the decision of the Congress. It would not be dignified to say that it was a thoughtless decision or that it was obtained by Mr. Gandhi as some people allege by packing the house with his followers. Howsoever we may regret the lack of deeper practical insight in public affairs shown by Mr. Gandhi we have no right to quarrel with him over the means used by him for getting his resolution passed for they were means not repugnant to the letter or the spirit of the existing constitution. Moreover we must in fairness acknowledge that throughout the debate Mr. Gandhi never showed any bitterness, ill will or even impatience. If he has won the fight he has won it fairly and we must yield it to him ungrudgingly.

The keenest difference of opinion having existed regarding the boycott of Councils the movement was a trying and a tempting one for its opponents. The close voting in the Subjects-Committee could easily lend itself as an argument in favour of disregarding the Congress Resolution. It could be plausibly

argued that by disregarding a particular resolution of the Congress you do not necessarily estop yourself from being a Congressman. Quite handy again might be the expression of opinion given by Mr Gandhi himself that obedience or disobedience to a Congress resolution was after all, a matter of individual conscience, and this psychological conundrum might be regarded as aptly illustrated by the avowal of Mr Gandhi himself that he for one would have persisted in his campaign of Non-co operation and stuck to his programme even if he had lost and the Congress refused to take up his cue. But we are glad that, after all only robust common sense has prevailed in the matter and no quarter has at last been given to any casuistic quibbles. The Congress decreed the boycott of Councils and the only manly course even for Mr Gandhi's opponents is to accept the situation. Mr Gandhi has no exclusive oracular authority to interpret any resolution of the Congress and even his relenting charity cannot save the situation for any one. If there are any who feel disappointment in expectation or the dislocation of longsettled plans and cherished policies they may have this consolation that in loyally accepting the decision of the Congress it is not they but Mr Gandhi himself who is now on trial. We do not say this in a spirit of victimising Mr Gandhi but only for pointing out the quarter in which the centre of the gravity of responsibility really lies. Even Mr Gandhi's failure would of course be *our* failure. If there is any humiliation or mortification arising out of the failure of his programme as practical politics we shall willingly share it with Mr Gandhi for Mr Gandhi had intended the programme not for his personal benefit but for the benefit of the country at large. All the same we frankly stick to our opinion that the Congress resolution is most unfortunate, both in its scope and wording and we reserve to ourselves the fullest and freest right to get it modified in future.



## A NEW CONGRESS CONSTITUTION\*

## A DRAFT SCHEME

For the purposes of the Congress organisation the whole country should be divided into as many provinces as there are definite linguistic groups in the country (Enumerate 15 Groups)

Each such province should have a separate Provincial Congress Committee with fixed head-quarters

The constituent bodies of a Provincial Congress Committee shall be

- (1) District Congress Committees
- (2) Taluka Congress Committees
- (3) Affiliated bodies or associations

A Native State comprised within a Taluka or District shall be treated as part of that Taluka or District. A Native State extending over more than one Taluka or District may be regarded as comprised in all those Talukas or Districts over which it extends. (Thus the Bhore State villages are included in three Districts some in Satara some in Poona and some in Kolaba. Therefore the subjects of the Bhore State may join Taluka or District Congress Committees in any of the three Districts at their pleasure or convenience). There shall be no separate Taluka or District Congress Committee for a Native State. (For some time till the subjects of Native States become better able to assert themselves. For the present they need only the protection of organisations in British territory)

Any male or female resident of a Taluka who is 21 years of age and who signs and accepts the Congress Constitution and pays the prescribed fee can claim to be a member of a Taluka Congress Committee

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\* *Mahratta* 26th Sept 1920

Any male or female resident of any Taluka in a District, who is of the age of 21 and pays the prescribed fee, can claim to be a member of the District Congress Committee if he or she signs and accepts the Congress Constitution

A Taluka or District Congress Committee may make its own rules as to the fees and attendance of its members subject to the approval of the Provincial Congress Committee

A Taluka Congress Committee shall be entitled to elect members to act on the District Congress Committee, as its special representatives at the rate of 1 per ten thousand population

A District Congress Committee shall be entitled to elect members to sit on the Provincial Congress Committee as its special representatives at the rate of 1 per one lakh of population

The Provincial Congress Committee shall consist of (1) ordinary members, (2) special representatives from District (3) representatives of affiliated bodies

Any resident of a Province who is 21 years of age and signs and accepts the Congress Constitution, can claim to be an ordinary member of the Provincial Congress Committee

Each Provincial Congress Committee can make its own rules as to (1) the fees to be paid by its members, (2) conditions of affiliation for affiliated bodies or associations within its jurisdiction and formation of District and Taluka Committees

The decision of the Provincial Congress Committee shall be final as to any questions or relations as between a Taluka Congress Committee, and a District Congress Committee, and affiliated bodies

The decision of the All India Congress Committee shall be final as to any questions or relations as between a District Congress Committee and a Provincial Congress Committee

Each Provincial Congress Committee shall elect a small body called the Council for administering its ordinary affairs. The number of representatives on the council for each District shall be in the same proportion which the total number of special representatives of each District in the Provincial Congress Committee bears to the total number of the members of the Provincial Congress Committee.

The All India Congress Committee shall consist of 100 members (exclusive of all past presidents of the Congress) elected by all the constituent Provincial Congress Committees in proportion to the numerical strength of the total population of the principal linguistic groups in the Province. The election of the members of the All India Congress Committee shall be made and notified to the Secretaries of the Congress before the 24th of November in each year. The members elected to the All India Congress Committee by any Provincial Congress Committee shall contain at least 3 from among the special representatives if any, elected by the District Congress Committees to sit on the Provincial Congress Committee.

The present procedure about the election of the Congress President may stand.

The National Congress, when in session shall consist of —

- (1) The Subjects Committee,
- (2) The Deliberative Congress
- (3) The Congress Demonstration

The Subjects Committee shall consist of six representatives of each province elected by each Provincial Congress Committee three of whom must be members of the All India Congress Committee for the Province and three special delegates who may not be the members of the All India Congress committee for the Province. The Subjects Committee shall hold and conclude its sittings at the place of the Congress

session for the year at least 48 hours before the opening of the session of the Deliberative Congress. The agenda for the Subjects Committee shall be prepared by the Secretaries of the Congress and shall include all proposals or propositions submitted for this purpose by any Provincial Congress Committee, at least fifteen days before the date of the first meeting of the Subjects Committee. The Subjects Committee shall be presided over by the President-elect or in his absence a President elected by the Subject Committee at its first meeting. The President may in his discretion allow any proposition to be brought before the Subjects Committee though it may not be included in the original agenda. The President instead of putting the full text of any resolution before the Subjects Committee for discussion or amendment may only take a vote on the elementary or categorical points arising out of any item in the agenda or the resolutions allowed in his discretion and may leave the actual drafting of the resolutions to a sub committee of the Subjects Committee consisting of himself and not more than one representative from each Province to be elected on the spot by the members representing that Province.

The Deliberative Congress shall consist of an unlimited number of delegates elected by the Provincial the District or Taluka Congress Committees. Affiliated bodies may elect at their own meetings or at public meetings organised by them. Distinguished visitors and guests may be allowed to attend the Deliberative Congress, if invited by the Reception Committee.

The agenda for the Deliberative Congress shall consist of (a) draft resolutions certified by the President of the Subjects Committee as passed by that Committee and amendments proposed thereto and notified to the President-elect, of the Deliberative Committee in the manner stated hereafter.

The draft resolutions as certified by the president of the Subjects Committee shall be printed and made available to any delegate of the Congress at least twenty four hours before the opening of the session of the Deliberative Congress. Any delegate of the Congress shall be entitled to move any amendments to the draft resolutions provided he is supported by at least ten delegates each from any three Provinces. No amendment can be admitted and allowed to be moved as a matter of right unless (a) it is worded in the strict form of an amendment and handed to the President at least 18 hours before the opening of the Deliberative Congress. The president having regard to the time likely to be at the disposal of the Deliberative Congress may limit the amendments to be moved on each resolution to a fixed number in which case a choice between different amendments may be made by ballot in the presence of any movers or supporters of the amendments who may care to be present on the occasion. The Deliberative Congress shall be opened after preliminaries by the speech of the Chairman of the Reception Committee which shall not exceed twenty minutes and shall as nearly as possible be confined to a welcome to the delegates and the affairs of his Province. This shall be followed by the formal or rather informal election of the President and the speech of the President which shall not exceed 45 minutes. Copies of the speeches of the Chairman of the Reception Committee as well as the President shall be printed in English Hindi and also in the principle vernacular of the Province where the Congress meets and shall be handed to the delegates, visitors and spectators when they enter the pandal.

The President will then put to the meeting first, draft resolutions to which no amendments may have been received and secondly contested draft resolutions together with the amendments thereto in such order as he may deem fit. A

limited number of speeches for and against both draft resolutions and amendments may be allowed at the discretion of the President who may impose a time-limit of ten minutes to the proposer and five minutes to the seconder or supporter. All resolutions and amendments shall be formally put to the vote and decided by a majority of hands shown for or against, unless a division is called for immediately in which case the voting shall be by Provinces.

The session of the Deliberative Congress shall terminate with (1) the announcement of the names of the members of the All India Congress Committee certified as elected by Provincial Congress Committee for the ensuing year and the election by the Congress of its office bearers for the new year. The permanent office bearers for the new year of the Congress shall be the President of the last session of the Congress, three General Secretaries (one of whom shall also be the Treasurer) and the All India Congress Committee.

The Congress Demonstration may be held for two days in the Congress pandal as part of the Congress session. It shall be presided over by the President of the Deliberative Congress and may be attended by the delegates, invited visitors and guests and such number of spectators as may be admitted by the Reception Committee. The Programme of the Demonstration may consist of, first, a speech by the President followed by speeches on one resolution after another as adopted by the Deliberative Congress, delivered by the most prominent or effective speakers from all provinces, as far as possible. There shall however be no formal or even informal voting on any of the resolutions which will simply be affirmed and explained to the audience. The speeches shall be as far as possible in the vernaculars. The President shall have all the powers for the purposes of inviting, allowing and disallowing speakers, imposing a time-limit upon them and

preserving peace and order in the assembly. The President may at his discretion allow any speeches to be made even against any of the resolutions.

### A ROUGH SCHEME OF A NATIONAL SCHOOL\*

The question of National Education has two aspects. In the first place it may be looked upon as a question of educational reform and secondly it may be treated as an item of the programme of Non-co-operation. In its first aspect the question has already been before the public for the last 15 years and more. Schemes of National Education were framed by different people for the purpose of improving education and to make it self supporting, self reliant and suited to the needs of the present national aspirations. These schemes were tried in a few educational institutions started specially for the purpose but it must be said that they never received a full and fair trial as the institutions collapsed partly for want of boys as in Bengal partly for want of funds and partly also for the repressive policy adopted by Government, as in a few places of the Maharashtra and Berars.

Treating the question of National Education in its second aspect our difficulties are in one sense not so great as in the other case for National Education as a measure of Non-co-operation is frankly more destructive than constructive and its extreme advocate may content himself with withdrawing boys from the present system of education though he may have no constructive programme or institution to substitute for the one displaced. As Mr. Gandhi has declared he can contemplate with equanimity the spectacle of school and

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\**Matratta* 21st November, 1920

college boys remaining at home without education of any kind, as if we were all in the midst of a war, when schools would be closed like law courts. This, however, is an extreme or ultimate position, which will not be readily taken up by every one, though he may be an advocate of the policy of Non-co-operation. The average Non-co-operator, I think, will be prepared to withdraw his boys from schools and colleges, provided some scheme and institution of useful, that is to say, practical, if not highly cultural, education is already provided for them

I have been consulted by a number of students, who think they are prepared to sacrifice the usual prospects depending upon the present system of education in aided or recognized educational institutions, but who expect in return to be provided with facilities, which will enable them to earn at least an humble livelihood and receive an educational certificate from a respectable body of non-official examiners in different subjects. To put it rather crudely, I may say that boys do appreciate the position that Non-co-operation consists in one of its aspects in discontinuing the tradition of making a fetish of university education, but they are averse to be branded as mere vagabonds who gave up routine education simply because they were either too lazy or dense-headed to do anything useful by way of education. Personally I think there is some sense in this contention and it is the duty of every Non-co-operator, who calls himself a responsible leader, to make some, though it may not be a wholly adequate, provision for giving such useful education, as has been indicated above, to those boys who would be prepared to sacrifice their prospects and career.

In my talk with boys in Poona I have met with boys of both sorts, (1) those who would not give up the present course of education on any account and (2) those who are



prepared to give up the present course of education, only provided, some suitable substitute is provided for them from the National point of view. The attention of the advocates of National Education as a measure of Non-co-operation must, I think, be centred upon this class.

It is, of course, difficult to make schemes of useful education at a moment's notice and more difficult, of course, to find funds for them, but I venture to make such a scheme on the supposition that the propagandism of Non-co-operation in Poona may result in the first instance in releasing about 100 boys from the present higher educational institutions in Poona. For obvious reasons, one could take into consideration, in framing such a scheme, only boys who have either passed the Matriculation examination, or acquired educational attainments corresponding to that examination. Only Under-graduates can be useful for a scheme like the one I propose, because the scheme provides for only a two year course of education, at the end of which period the boys may be able to go out into the world and begin to earn their livelihood side by side with taking part in public affairs.

Assuming there are 100 boys to be provided for, I would group them into two classes, the Junior and the Senior, according to their present attainments. The course of studies would be limited to only five subjects, in each of which there will be an examination at the end of the two years. The subjects will be as follows —

- (1) Vernacular and English hand writing, typewriting, stenography and knowledge of ordinary accounts
- (2) One selected craft
- (3) Knowledge of English, including composition, translation, letter writing, newspaper reading, precis writing, English conversation and the study of one text book of standard English prose.

- (4) Knowledge of Indian culture, including reading from religious, secular, classical, Sanskrit and Vernacular literature and general acquaintance with authors in selected department

- (5) Civics and elementary law

The objects underlying the above scheme of studies or curriculum need not be explained at length. It is intended thereby to curtail in the first place the period of studies as far as possible, and secondly, to make the instruction as practicable as possible. I feel no necessity to offer an apology for laying greater stress on the practical side than the cultural side of studies in the present scheme. The immediate object is to enable the boys, by completing this course of studies, to become fit for earning a decent livelihood and the object will be best served by the inclusion of such subjects as hand-writing, type-writing the knowledge of some craft and also an acquaintance with ancient culture, which might be useful if a boy takes up the profession of a village preacher. The practical aspect of education is entirely ignored in the present University course of studies and a graduate—an ordinary graduate at any rate,—finds after taking his B.A. degree that he is not particularly fit for anything except the profession of a School master. This particular profession is, of course, as good and honourable as any other, but in the first place, it is least productive or lucrative from a financial point of view, and, secondly, it only helps to perpetuate the same unproductive and literary education of which he himself is a product. On the other hand, a boy who may complete the two years' course indicated above will be fit to enter any office or establishment, and unending may be the avenues of prospects which will be opened to him, especially if he gets a good chance of apprenticeship in a large firm or factory.

Many people regard the four years spent in the present course of college studies leading to a University degree as a waste of time. A running analysis of these studies will only strengthen this view. There may be some small and indirect cultural value in the study of such subjects as Logic as at present prescribed for the Inter class or the study of Sanskrit classics or Shakespeare's dramas and English novels, but we have hardly got the requisite leisure for culture of this kind. Some of these subjects could be as well studied even without any professorial help after a man settles in life with some profession as his own. Moreover if by sacrificing cultural education of this kind one can have the satisfaction of getting rid of a Government-controlled University or an aided or affiliated college it would certainly be worth having in these days of Non-co-operation.

I will now turn to consider the financial aspect of the scheme on of course a modest basis. The staff of teachers required for carrying out the scheme for two years and the scale of salaries would be somewhat as follows —

1 Teacher of English	..	Salary Rs 75 p.m
1	"	" 65 "
1 Indian Culture	,	" 75 "
1 Lecturer	"	" 65 "
1 Teacher of Civics and Elementary Law	,	" 75 "
1 Selected craft	"	" 150 "
1 Assistant Teacher	"	" 75 "
1 Half time Teacher of Accountancy	,	" 50 "
1 Teacher of Shorthand and Typewriting		100 "
		<hr/>
Total		" 730 "

(This last item may be provided for otherwise by an agreement with an established firm doing the work of teaching students stenography and typewriting.)

The total amount of the monthly salaries of the above staff comes to Rs 730 p m , to which may be added another 70 p m , for office establishment This gives the total of Rs 9,600 for one year or 19 200, or, roughly, Rs 20,000 for two years, to which may be added the following items —

Building rent	Rs 1,000 for two years.
Equipment, tool & plant for a small	
craft workshop	.. .. 5,000
Cost of ten typewriters	. .. 3 000
Furniture, etc	, 1 000
The total, therefore may roughly be	
estimated at	. Rs 30 000

To the credit side we can put down only the item of fees. Considering that this is a special course of instruction and that the period of studies is brought down from four to two years, I may take it that the students may be willing to pay a fee of Rs 100 per year Making allowance for ten free students, I may calculate the total income of fees for two years at Rs 18 000 that leaves a deficit of about 12,000, which it should not be difficult to collect by subscriptions

As for a time table it may generally be assumed that instruction for one hour in each subject per week day (excluding of course the necessary holidays and vacations) will quite suffice for the purpose I cannot say this with perfect confidence as regards the selected craft for which, however, a student taking up this course of studies will, I think be willing to devote an extra hour or two, either in the morning or in the evening as the case may be, but I can say with confidence that one hour's study per day for two years in any of the above subjects will be quite enough for ordinary proficiency in that subject

As regards the prospects of a student who may complete this two years' course of studies, it need only be roundly

stated that his income will certainly be larger than that of an ordinary graduate. Having completed these studies, he would readily be admitted as an apprentice in any shop, office or factory and it would not be long before he secures a salaried post. At the same time he would go out more fitted for public life than an ordinary graduate.

The question may naturally be asked whether it would not be possible to get a non-official and respectable body of examiners to test the students at the end of two years and to issue a certificate to them showing that the students have attained a particular degree of efficiency as compared with the ordinary graduate but that sort of provision could easily be made during the period of the first two years under trial.

I must state in conclusion that, though I may appear to have pleaded against culture, I have not necessarily excluded it from my view for a course of studies having only a cultural value may be easily added on to be gone through in a third year if students so desire it and if a large number of students are seen to be attracted to this new institution.

## TILAK NATIONAL COLLEGE\*

" We feel thankful for being able to open a new college in Poona to-day It is, as you all know, named the 'Tilak Mahavidyalaya' It is intended to serve a double purpose Its immediate *raison d'être* is no doubt to make a suitable provision for the education of those students, who have left Government or aided or recognised colleges, in obedience to the call of the Indian National Congress for Non-co-operation with Government But it is also intended to serve another and a more abiding purpose For it forms the nucleus of an educational memorial to the late Lokamanya Tilak, and may, with the grace of God, develop into a really National University for the Maharashtra

So far as its first object is concerned the Tilak College meets a manifest need It is not for us to say what is the most proper interpretation to be put upon the Congress resolution on Non-co-operation or the best or the most effective method of carrying it out But there can be no two opinions as to the duty of Congressmen in every province to arrange for the unfinished studies of those young men, who give a most practical demonstration of their loyalty to the Congress and the country at such enormous self sacrifice, by severing their connection with existing and well-established educational institutions It is obvious that the provision for these studies cannot be as attractive in the beginning as its enemies or critics would unreasonably insist upon or even its friends would earnestly desire But there are other things which are calculated to more than make up for this deficiency In the first place the education provided for in the college will

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\* (SPEECH AT THE OPENING CEREMONY 12th Dec. 1920 )

be more practical without being less cultural, than that imparted in any of the present Arts colleges. It may be useless for government service, or even in the eyes of those employers, who have hopelessly entered into the official spirit and spurn or look with horror upon every reform or variation in the existing scheme of men and matters in the direction of a wholesome reactionary assertion of the National spirit. But it may be definitely relied upon for enabling the students to earn an independent or at least a self respecting livelihood. Then again the student will, it is believed, go out with a much better equipment for taking practical part in the public life of the country not only because he will, during the course of his two years studies in the college, be free from the restrictions which come upon him with the Government grant in aid or University recognition accepted by other institutions, but also because he will receive in the class room more actual instruction in the legislative and administrative lore in connection with the present as well as the future political condition of the country.

There are also one or two other things which we must not omit to mention. For example, there will be, we hope, greater affinity of spirit between the students and the teachers in this college than could be realised in any of the other existing institutions, for the obvious reason that both of them will be impelled by a common selfless purpose which brings this college into existence, and which ought to make them wish for its complete success. Lastly, both the students and the teachers will feel strengthened in their resolution by the common bond of affection for the late Lok Tilak whose name the college bears and whose memory will ever be a source of inspiration to them.

That brings me to the second purpose which this college is intended to fulfil. It is to erect a suitable memorial in Poona

to the late Lokamanya , and I take the liberty to congratulate the Poona Tilak Memorial Committee upon eventually deciding upon this form of a memorial to him so far as the Maharashtra is concerned It is a well-known fact that Lok Tilak's mind, in relation to his ideal of National service, opened on the threshold of his public career, in the direction of an educational institution Though a full fledged Graduate in Laws, he wanted very much to be only a college professor, himself a life long student of culture, and an instructor at the same time, to the youth of the Maharashtra in those studies which lead through culture to a right perception of their duties towards their country It is well-known that Lok Tilak joined the late Vishnu Shastri Chiplunkar in the foundation of the New English School, but what deserves to be equally well-known is that, had circumstances been more favourable, he would have started a college rather than a school A well known biography of the late Vishnu Shastri Chiplunkar bears independent testimony to this fact of his life The immediate initiative having however rested with Mr Chiplunkar, the senior man and the leader of the band, only a school was started But the thread of Lok Tilak's aspiration for a college was not lost in his life as a school master In fact it was Lok Tilak who took the lead with some others in bringing the present Fergusson College into existence No one need be told that the college was then tainted in three respects according to the present and the latest view of National education It glorified the name of the then official head of the Bombay administration , it was affiliated to an official University, and later on it began to receive Government grant in aid These defects, it goes without saying, have since been only accentuated also in other directions owing to the political opinions of those into whose hands the control of the college eventually passed,



after Lok. Tilak, and some others who shared his views, either died or left the institution. But I am not here concerned with finding fault with any existing institutions. I am aware that it is naturally extremely trying for those who develop institutions according to a particular policy to suddenly change their policy and thus bring dreaded destruction upon their cherished institutions. That however is no reason why the nation should suppress its aspiration, which seeks the establishment of independent educational institutions. Leaving bodies like the National Congress, supported and strengthened by public opinion, to solve the problem as they best could, of withdrawing the entire body of students from Government aided or recognised institutions, the leaders of every province or sub-province ought to proceed at once to devise means to provide for the education, from the proper point of view of advanced Nationalism, of those students, at any rate, who feel the call of the country, and leave their school or college in obedience to it. It is, of course, precisely with this immediate object in view that the Tilak Mahavidyalaya is being started, but the organisers of the college mean the institution also to be nothing less than a nucleus of a University for the Maharashtra. That may seem a far-off cry, but it is certainly not a forlorn hope. The development of education has been steadily advancing from purely Government owned and controlled to aided and recognised institutions, from these to un-aided but recognised ones, and from these again to both unrecognised and unaided ones. The foundation of a National University for the Maharashtra will only give the needed impetus to the multiplication of this last kind of institutions. Moreover, the ideal of special Universities has now been proved to be a practicable one by the example of the Benares Hindu University and the Aligarh University. It only remained to improve upon the example

of these and start a University absolutely unaided by Government and not affiliated to any Government department

When Lok Tilak, Professor Bijapurkar, Chintamanrao Vaidya and Nana Saheb Deshmukh worked for the Maharashtra Vidya-Prasarak Mandal in 1905 and 1906 they had this very end in view, though they concentrated their efforts in the first instance upon a primary and a middle school ; and we are sure that had not the Bombay Government mischievously intervened and suppressed the Samarth Vidyalaya by the shamelessly unjustifiable use of the unlawful Societies Act, we might have had to-day a veritable National College and a University at Talegaon Well, later in sequence of time I must mention the Indian Women's University at Hingne and in connection with that the name of my esteemed friend Professor Karve whose phenomenal devotion to the cause of Female Education has now established this institution on indisputably concrete foundations The Indian Women's University has been, since its inception, an absolutely National institution in all its aspects ; and as one connected with that institution from the very beginning in more ways than one, I fervently hope that the University will strictly and religiously adhere, for all time to come, to its fundamental creed of independence of Government aid and official recognition in any shape or form, express or implied It is rather strange, though for that very reason all the more creditable to Professor Karve, that a really National University for the education of women should come into existence even before that for the education of men. But chivalry forbids that we should grudge our sisters *their good fortune in this respect* We may even take it as a proof of the universal law of compensation that rules the world, and regard the early establishment of a Women's

National University as compensation for all the accumulated neglect that we heaped upon their education in the past.

Mahatma Gandhi has already founded another such University for male students in Gujerath, and though we at Poona have to content ourselves with starting only a National College for the moment, we have before our eye, even at this moment, almost a complete chart, in broad outlines of course, of the National University that is to come into being at a not distant future date

The small dimensions of an institution like our present college is not an index, much less a criterion, of its value and importance. All great institutions had only humble beginnings. We feel confident that the association of Lok Tilak's name with this college is bound to guarantee a bright future for it as the nucleus of a National University, the principal features of which will be (1) provision for student-protestants against aided and recognised Colleges, (2) provision for practical combined with literary education, (3) popularisation of liberal knowledge by lectures and lectures even unconnected with any school or college preparing students for examination, (4) publication of suitable school and college text books written in popular language on all sorts of subjects, and (5) training of workers intending to devote their life to National service in various departments. The Tilak University will thus be a combination at the same time of an examining body, a teaching body and a society of National life-workers. Much of the concrete shaping of those ideas of course depends upon the amount of public support received for the cause both in men and in money. But the above will very probably be the lines of actual development of the idea of a Tilak University.

We do not wish to depreciate the arduous labours of those who have for so many years fought an uphill fight and an inch

to inch fight against Government and those who dominate in the officialised universities in the matter of making them democratic in their constitution and Nationalist in their purpose. But it is no use closing our eyes to the hopelessness of the task. The exigencies of the National situation moreover make it imperative that frank revolution must now be preferred to such tediously steady reform in educational matters, at the risk of misunderstanding, misrepresentation and even ridicule. The success of course where it may be achieved, and even the failure we dare say, of bold experiments in National Education are bound to help, from outside, the cause of the riddance of foreign and official domination in the University. A growingly severe public opinion and bold corporate action is the only potent solvent for official impudence and arrogance, and attempts to start National Universities are at least as urgently called for and justifiable in the educational struggle as our repeated and almost cyclical campaigns and movements for winning the political Swarajya."

## THE NAGPUR CONGRESS.\*

This day week the Indian National Congress will be in session at Nagpur. The days during which the Congress sits are admittedly the days set apart for the settlement of National accounts. The whole nation assembles to take stock of the happenings of the year that is out and to chalk out paths along which national work is to proceed throughout the year that is in. Naturally manifold problems, some of great others of less but all of certain national moment and significance come up for consideration. The gathering being the gathering of the best brains of the nation, a good deal of deep thought is bestowed upon all questions from many and varied stand points and well-conned resolutions are taken defining future work in clear and vivid outline. Such has been the good luck of the Congress that every year dawns, charged with some new problems crying for solution, with some fresh ideas or principles calling upon the country to galvanise or to modify its old hackneyed and jog trot methods of work. Especially since the Lucknow Congress of 1916 the Parliament of India has dealt with and decided a crop of questions unparalleled in gravity and national importance. The Special Congress of Calcutta is a landmark in the history of Indian Nationalism in so far as the decisions taken therein effected a revolution—peaceful though yet a revolution beyond doubt—in the state of affairs of the country and gave to India's long-drawn struggle for freedom a tone and a life which sooner rather than later must lead it to sure success. If the problems facing the extraordinary Congress were great those that promise to come before the ensuing Congress are greater still. We advisedly say greater, because the Calcutta Congress had only to take

account of the perils of the voyage as imagined from the shore, while the coming Congress will have to calculate all the dangers and difficulties which experience of four months has revealed. Nor are other questions likely to be taken up by the Congress of less import.

One question on the agenda which stands out in bolder relief, is the question of the change of the Congress creed. Whether Non-co-operation is not of equal importance is immaterial to all intents and purposes. Since the fixation of the creed much water has flowed under the bridges. The whole aspect of affairs has completely changed, India's political vision has been enlarged, and she has shot up so high, along with the rest of the world, in political aspirations that the ideal has become as unsuitable to her as the clothes of a three-year-o'd child would be to the man at seventy-two. Discussion is likely to centre round the point of the definition of Swarajya. As a matter of fact there ought to be the least difficulty about this point. All politically-minded people will agree that the best judge of a suitable form of government for a certain people is the people themselves. Again, in some quarters much ado is made of 'within the British Empire.' We fail to understand why India's goal should be sought to be cramped into this procrustean bed. None in his senses thinks of snapping all connection with the Empire, but it need not be idolised and held sacrosanct. It is the people's right to choose whether they are to remain within or without and certainly the setting of such a limit is a useless and hobbling encumbrance. If all people unanimously agree that the Empire has become a dead weight for them and their country they must be at liberty to withdraw themselves from the crushing position. *Besides the hair-splitting about the definition of Swarajya and the retention or the deletion of the words*

'within the British Empire,' the distinction between 'legitimate and peaceful means' on the one hand and 'constitutional means' on the other will it is more than probable, give rise to a miasma of doubts and suspicions. In plain-speaking, for our part we believe the distinction is not more useful and conclusive than that between tweedledee and tweedledum. For, whether the word legitimate or constitutional is included, both of them may be held to involve legal or illegal means. It cannot be definitely laid down that everything legitimate is legal or that what is legal is invariably constitutional. Then again the question of the redistribution of Indian provinces on linguistic basis must now be taken up in right earnest. The necessity for this is too patent to need discussion or expatiation. In one word, all National work will be greatly speeded up and into the bargain, it will be more thorough going and more harmonious than now. Of course, we are not of those persons who hold common language to be an indispensable factor in the promotion of National consciousness but we are sure that the presence of that factor conduces to its development and facilitates National propagand of every sort, as nothing else so effectively does. As an instance we might point to the problem of National Universities and National Education. The numerous thorny questions which now beset National Education will be automatically solved. More, as a corollary to this question of redistribution the question of Native States rears up its head. These Native States are, no doubt an anomaly in the map of India. Surely it is not of our making and yet we must help to wipe it out. When the whole of India is ablaze, when the heart of every Indian in the British raj is throbbing with national political consciousness and is inspired with the idea of Swarajya it is impossible to stop the flames from over-

spreading the States and the political awaking and the idea of Swarajya from sweeping their territories. It is now high time that they were incorporated into the Congress and that the subjects of these Native States were allowed to march shoulder to shoulder with their fellow-brethren in the British raj along the path of National Swarajya. The opening of this question will be much like the opening of Pandora's box which one had better keep closed. But it may be hoped that with the assistance of master minds from among these subjects the *savants* of the National Congress will reach a fitting solution. Well, while we are on the point of the Congress Constitution, it may not be amiss to write a few lines about the organisation of the Congress. When the principle of limitation of the number of delegates is accepted—and the odds are that it will be—the question of actual fixation may with advantage be left to the Congress itself. A class of thinkers there is that makes a point of huge demonstrations; but if the massive overgrowth is clipped from the body of the Congress, it will gain in profundity and intensity what it will lose in bulk and expanse. In addition to the restriction of the bloated numbers of delegates, the question of turning the Congress from a purely deliberative body into a mixed one for deliberation and execution as well calls for serious attention. Till very recently the custom was that the Congress, after passing every year quirefuls of endless resolutions, cleanly buried itself like the spider in its web or the fly within a bead of amber, to rise again only at the year-end. Of late that custom is changing, as it ought to change in view of the vastly altered circumstances. This point once before has formed the bone of contention between the late Lokamanya and the late Sir Pherozeshah Mehta. The former never tired of stressing this point of making of the



Congress an executive organisation, and we emphasise it once again. For all practical purposes the time for deliberation and argument is past and that for action and active propaganda has come. If propaganda work rests with a central representative body like the National Congress and if it were to radiate all through the country thence in an efficiently organised and well directed way it is bound to be far more productive and effective.

So much for the change of the Congress constitution and its auxiliaries. The second question that will figure conspicuously in the Congress pandal, will be that of Non-co-operation. We quite agree with Montaigne when he says, "there can be no two opinions alike in this world, no more than two hairs or two grains," the most universal quality is diversity." But the wonder of wonders is that in this diversity of opinions in India there is an unchallengeable unity of opinion about Non-co-operation. The whole nation has gone Non-co-operator. Of course, as they say, the Devil must build a chapel where God builds a temple and when the Non-co-operators have their campaign in full swing, the anti Non-co-operationists too must beat their 'muffled drums.' But all their attempts are like the last flicker of a lamp which flares up and as soon goes out. These anti Non-co-operationists are so few in number and so reactionary in attitude that in the pandal they deserve short shrift. Having summarily disposed of these traitors, the Congress will have to take proper account of the inevitable diversity of opinions about Non-co-operation. That the Congress cannot recede from the position taken may be understood to be as true as the fact of Sunrise every morning. It is equally true that on the question of details, as distinguished from the principle of Non-co-operation, there was considerable difference of opinion at Calcutta and there will arise keen

difference even in the coming session. No doubt there are defects in the Congress resolution, as every human thing beneath the Sun must have defects ; as far as possible they must be remedied or at least mollified in such a way as to allow of work without friction and let or hindrance. The Congress will witness three schools of thought which may be designated for clearness' sake as (1) the conservative school, (2) the liberal school and (3) the radical school. The first wishes to retain the present programme of Non-co-operation as it stands. The second is of opinion that, the present items being accepted and worked out, reform should be gradually introduced. The view of the last-named school is that the programme must be drafted *ab initio*. There is no denying the fact that the resolution does stand in need of amendment, if it is to be more expeditiously productive. We have no quarrels with the Resolution as it is, but our frank opinion is that, if Non-co-operation is to be speedily fruitful, it must be widely diffused throughout the country like manure which grows the more efficacious the more is it spread. The present Resolution extends only to the fringe of the whole population, supposing all people, affected by it, practise it. It must be so amended as to bring within its fold and touch closely all classes and all interests in the land. It must go down to the peasant drudging in the field as much as it must reach the merchant prince rolling in luxury. Whether or no a particular class will bring the Resolution into effective operation depends entirely on the class concerned. The point is that the whole nation must be convinced that the Resolution pervades all with judicial impartiality, that it is no respecter of classes or interests, and that it demands some sacrifice from all people, educated or uneducated, rich or poor, merchant or agriculturist, young or old, man or

woman. To-day's Resolution tackles the lawyers and the students and leaves the merchants and the tillers altogether untouched. If we look back a little into history we find that the British flag followed British trade in India. Will it not then be far more effective to lay the axe at the very root of the Upas tree of British administration which we so dearly abhor? Such faults of omission must be removed and the Resolution made all pervasive, thoroughly impartial and equitable. Such then are the arresting questions of the day and we are quite sure that the National Congress will decide them with authority. We wish the Congress a brilliant success.

### THE STUDENT MOVEMENT. \*

The call of the Congress in respect of Non-co-operation has received greater response from Indian students than any other class. A larger percentage of them have boycotted Government or aided educational institutions than pleaders their law courts or merchants their friend and patron, the importer of foreign goods. What may be the reason for this? It is said that the unscrupulous agitator has chosen the student world as the field for his operations simply because students are more gullible than either merchants or pleaders. This involves a two fold injustice, first, to the agitator in that it is assumed that he deliberately sacrifices the students for a vain glorious purposes of his own, and secondly, to the students themselves in that it is assumed that they can be easily fooled. Both the assumptions, are, however, entirely unfounded. The real fact of the matter is that the advice and the urge of the Congress propagandist though equally

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\**Mahratta* 6th, Feb 1921.

directed subjectively towards all classes of people, proves objectively more fruitful in the case of students than others, simply because the former are more sensitive to a feeling of patriotism. That is obviously something different from saying that students are mere fools. But even when it is conceded that students are more impressionable than others, it does not follow that they are driven by the agitation into the movement like dried leaves of trees by a malignant wind into the forest fire. What actually happens is simple enough. Wherever public meetings are advertised it is the students that more often attend them. It is the students that follow the political events in the country more keenly. It is they who more closely read and scan the newspapers. It is they who feel greater respect for the resolutions of National bodies like the Congress. It is they who are more ready for self-sacrifice. These being the facts, we do not know if our Moderate friends would require us to prohibit students from reading newspapers and attending public meeting, or to positively advise them against or even forbid them peremptorily from acting upon the Congress resolution and boycotting their colleges.

But it is not in India alone that students have been like this. The University boys all the world over have ever taken an active part in National movements. What else does the old English rhyme mean which says

' When Oxford draws the knife  
England is soon at strife "

Why else should the American poet sing of beautiful Youth as follows

Alladin's lamp and Fortunatus purse  
That holds the treasure of the Universe  
All possibilities are in its hands  
No danger daunts it, and no foe withstands

In its sublime audacity of faith  
 'Be thou removed' it to the Mountain saith  
 And with ambitious feet secure and proud  
 Ascend the ladder leaning on the cloud'

Longfellow's Sparrow Student mentions as an alternative to reading—

To sit in reverie and watch  
 The changing colour of the waves that break  
 Upon the idle sea-shore of the mind

Students will be nothing if not idealistic. And you cannot impeach a political leader if he will inspire their minds with ideas of self-sacrifice intended or calculated to serve a National cause. The mind of youth, taken collectively, is a National asset, and every public worker is perfectly entitled to use it as best as he could. Why should Mahatma Gandhi be debarred from appealing to the students to boycott education, at least for some time, if that can effectively destroy one brick the more of the edifice of bureaucratic prestige and help in winning Swarajya earlier by one moment, when Moderate leaders do not hold themselves debarred from advising them to stick to and strengthen the existing system of Government ridden education?

The question, however, is not without a practical side to it. Are not students really in an ideal position to make the kind of sacrifice demanded of them? After all University education is not the only valid passport to life. Numbers of self-reliant, self made men have entered life through other doors and come out of it with the plam of success in their hand and the dust of honourable labour on their body. On the other hand, University education has, as a rule, landed men in paths leading to a life of official or semi-official service and the settled Income and ease which that service brings with it. If therefore the present boycott movement

results in changing the track of life for some or bringing others out of the rut of a legal or pedagogic career, it is certainly a mercy to be thankful for. Then, again, students at their early age, are free from family cares, and their suspension of studies does not involve much of a financial loss for anybody. It is precisely an age when they may try a change of career, and a number of boys diverted accidentally in other times, from their routine studies have been found to fare much better than they would have done as the result of a straight academical course. It is only grown up men, men with the burdens of families on their back for whom varying a career would be as inadvisable as changing horses in the main stream. The students alone get, as well as deserve, the enviable opportunity, which one can have only once in life, to go 'larking' for their country, even if it ends only in larking and no more.

Non co-operating students can be disposed of in three ways. Those who have got comparatively well to do parents can profitably spend one year at home, if they do some useful extra reading and work as volunteers in the National movement in their own town or village. Those who may want to continue their studies and cannot afford one year off, can be provided for in some one or other of the new National Schools and Colleges which have been started mainly to give instructions to Non co-operating youths. They will easily obtain education in at least the Arts course if they could support themselves in the same way and pay the same fees as they did in the case of their old schools and colleges. But Non co-operating students can best attain the object of the Congress resolution by going out into the country as volunteers, maintaining themselves by doing some useful work either as teachers or preachers and carrying the Congress propaganda to

the very hearth and the heart of the great masses of population in the rural areas

The scheme is therefore, justifiable both on theoretical and practical grounds. The only legitimate limitations to the call to be given to students to come out can come from nothing but their own conscience, and the Congress has made expressed reservation in that respect in its Nagpur Resolution. We all know however, that there is not much in this scheme of suspension of studies to which any body's conscience could validly object, unless of course he be an anti Non-co-operator on principle. On the other hand we all know that conscience can easily be pleaded as a cover to hide our unreadiness for self sacrifice. As regards the actual practice of preaching the educational boycott, the fitness for the same must obviously be measured by the capacity of the preacher himself for sacrifice, and reckless preaching becomes peculiarly criminal for those who are brave on the platform but are distinguished for giving sacrifice a very wide berth in their private life.

## THE MALEGAON DISTURBANCES.\*

## NON-OFFICIAL COMMITTEE'S REPORT

We give below the full text of the report of the Malegaon Inquiry Committee as presented to the Maharashtra Provincial Congress Committee.

## THE REPORT.

"In pursuance of our appointment by Resolution No 8 passed at the First Maharashtra Provincial Conference held at Bassein in the month of May last, we have completed our inquiry into the recent Malegaon Disturbances. We append herewith the report of our inquiry for the information of the Maharashtra Provincial Congress Committee and we suggest that the same may now be published.

(2) The Committee consisted of the following members—1 Mr N C Kelkar, 2 Mr S M Paranjpe, 3 Mr Jamnadas Mehta, 4 Mr L B Bhopatkar, 5 V G Ketkar, 6 Mr V J Patel, 7 Mr Nasar Haji Mavji, 8 Mr C V Vaidya, 9 Maulana Shaikh Alam. Of these Messrs Patel, Mehta, Ketkar and Mavji visited Malegaon on the 11th and 12th May last, and did preliminary work. The Committee, as a Committee, proceeded to Malegaon on the 5th of June. The following members of the Committee were present at Malegaon for the inquiry viz Messrs N C Kelkar, V. J. Patel, Jamnadas Mehta, S M Paranjpe, V G Ketkar. Mr N C Kelkar was elected Chairman. The Committee formally commenced the work on the 6th of June and completed it on the 6th. On the 6th the Committee visited different places connected with the disturbances, and on the 8th the Committee visited the undertrial prisoners in the lock up presences of the public prosecutor.



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\**Mahratta* 7th Aug. 1921.

(3) The first act of the Committee on its arrival at Malegaon was the distribution of hundreds of handbills in Marathi, issued over the signatures of Messrs Marathe and Mahajan, two of the Secretaries of the Maharashtra Provincial Congress Committee in which public invitation was given to all concerned to appear before the Committee and give evidence

(4) The Committee examined thirty witnesses on the causes of the disturbances and incidental circumstances. In addition to these a large number of people appeared before the Committee and asked for legal assistance for their relatives who had been arrested by the authorities. All the witnesses were examined in camera. Some of them had expressed a desire that their evidence should be treated as confidential and the Committee has decided to treat it as such. All parties in Malegaon have assisted the Committee in their work of investigation—Co-operators, Non-co-operators, Moderates, Congress men, Khilafatists and anti Khilafatists, and all were represented more or less among the witnesses.

(5) No set questions were formulated for the examination of the witnesses. Each one was asked to relate the facts as he remembered them. Care was however taken to lead them from point to point both in order to secure brevity and a continuity of relation of events in chronological sequence as far as possible. Most of the witnesses were cross-examined by the members of the Committee at some length with a view to explore every possible avenue to truth.

(6) Almost the whole of evidence recorded was oral, there being only three documents which are attached to the oral statements and are forwarded along with this report.

(7) The terms of reference to the Committee, as contained in the resolution of the Bessein Conference, are as follows,—

" The tragic happenings of Malegaon, whether due to Non-co-operators or others, are extremely sorrowful and reprehensible. But this Conference is also of opinion that the conduct of officials during the first stages of this tragedy was censurable. This Conference sympathises with those poor families who suffered either in men or in property and appoints the following gentlemen to see that during further investigation or remedial measures guiltless people do not suffer in any way at the hands of Government. The following gentlemen should personally visit the scene of action soon and make a report to the Provincial Congress Committee —

1 Mr C V Vaidya

2 N C Kelkar

3 „ J M Mehta

4 „ V G Ketkar

5 S M Paranjpe

6 Mr L B Bhopatkar.

7 „ Nasar Haji Mavji.

8 „ V J Patel

9 „ Maulvi Abdul Alim "

(8) It will be seen that organisation of legal assistance, to such of the accused as may assert their innocence, and ask for such assistance in order to establish their innocence is an integral part of the instructions to the Committee. And taking this point first we have to report that the Committee did not leave Malegaon before assuring itself that such legal assistance would be forthcoming. The Committee learnt at Malegaon that Mr Azad Bar at law had accepted the brief for most of the accused persons in a professional capacity. Four of the remaining accused were the Committee was assured on good authority, to be defended by Mr R P Karandikar of Satara, and that Messrs. Kotwal, Raje and Joshi would assist Mr Azad. Lastly, the Committee arranged to post Mr Upadhye, District Pleader, Nasik, at Malegaon till the end of the case, to watch the proceedings on behalf of the Maharashtra Provincial Congress Commi

tee and also to take up the legal defence of all those that may not be otherwise provided for and would request legal assistance to establish their innocence

(9) Under the terms of reference the Committee is not concerned with the enquiry regarding the guilt or innocence of any of the persons now under trial, but has to confine itself solely to the previous history of these occurrences and has to ascertain whether how far and in what particular manner either Government officers or persons concerned in the political agitation at Malegaon during the last few months were responsible for the riot as remote or immediate contributing causes. The Committee therefore while going fully into the previous history of the disturbances has refrained from recording any opinion upon the question of the identity of any particular person or persons as actors or abettors in these crimes and has contented itself with an inquiry into the trend of events leading just upto the moment when the unlawful assembly began to be formed which actually developed into a riot aggravated by murder arson and looting of property.

(10) It appears that the town of Malegaon in the Nasik District with a population of some 25 000 a majority of whom are Mahomedans has been the scene of one or two riots during the last 40 years. But while in previous years the line of cleavage lay along religious differences between Hindus and Mahomedans in recent years they have covered an entirely new ground. It has been stated before us that 12 years ago the local Mahomedans were split up into two factions owing to differences in policy. One section took the name of Hidayat I Islam and the other called itself 'Bidahul I Islam'. The tendency of the Hidayat I Islam party was and has been to be on good terms with the local official world while the other school has been taking up an

independent attitude under the guidance of non-official local leaders. It is easy to see how the working of two such different policies would develop and extend to spheres of activities other than communal. The elected municipal councillors at Malegaon have mostly belonged to Bidabil-I-Islam party, while the Hidayat-I-Islam party has generally supplied the nominated men to the Municipality.

(11) Events, which have so deeply stirred the whole of India during recent years, did not leave Malegaon untouched. Here there has already been in existence for several years a Taluka Congress Committee, and a Khilafat Committee was organised 15 months ago, owing to the exertion of a Hindu worker Sonu Gowande. Since then Hindus and Mahomedans worked together in all public activities under the auspices of the Khilafat Committee, though no Hindu was actually a member of that body. Hindu-Moslem unity, which is now such a happy feature of public life in India, was also being increasingly cemented at Malegaon. Joint meetings were held to offer prayers for the recovery of the late Lok. Tilak, during his illness and subsequently to express public grief at his demise. But a surer test of the Hindu-Moslem unity could be recognised in the determination of both the communities in refusing to apply for permission from the local police for the public immersion of Ganapatis and Taboots at the end of the Ganapati and Mohorum weeks, which happened to coincide last year.

(12) It is not surprising that the Moderate elements amongst the Hindus and Mahomedans did not altogether approve of the infusion of a new life in Malegaon during the last fifteen months. The Hindu Moderate leaders were few in number and they were also educated men. Their activities therefore, by way of opposition to the new workers, were more covert. The Moderate Mahomedan leaders of the Hidayat-I-Islam

party were less restrained. They openly opposed the Khilafat movement in Malegaon and tried to dissuade the people from attending meetings convened under the auspices of the local Khilafat Committee.

(13) The differences between the opposing parties would not have perhaps come to a head had it not been for the starting of a Fund called the 'Imdad ul Islam Fund'. After Maulana Shoukat Ali's visit to Malegaon following the Nagpur Congress the idea of National Education took root in the minds of the local people and Mahomedan public opinion began to insist on Government grants to the existing Madressas being given up. It was suggested that if all the Momin weavers of Malegaon contributed one pice each to the fund for each sari sold by them to the merchants, the money necessary for the upkeep of National Schools could be easily collected. The suggestion met with ready acceptance by the weavers. The merchants who purchased the saris from the weavers were not to be called upon to make any financial contribution. It was enough contribution on their part if they deducted one pice per sari from payments made to each Momin weaver. The money thus collected with them and eventually handed it over from time to time to the collectors or the agents appointed for the purpose.

(14) The Imdad ul Islam Fund was started in the month of February 1921. The objects of the fund were among other things, the promotion of National Education in Malegaon and the relief of the distressed in Smyrna. All went on very well for some days. Very soon however the managers of the fund were confronted with opposition of two different kinds from two widely different quarters. Complaints began to be made by some of the leading Non-co-operators both Hindus and Mahomedans against the administration of the fund. In particular they alleged that part of the fund

was being diverted from its original purposes, and was spent on defraying the travelling expenses of certain Moulanas the tone of whose speeches the complainants did not approve. It appears from the evidence that the managers of the fund thereupon agreed that in future the fund would not be so diverted which promise however does not appear to have been kept.

(15) But the more direct and uncompromising opposition to the fund came from the side of the co-operators consisting of the Hindu and Mahomedan Moderates, and the latter formed the bulk of the Hidayat I Islam party including a dozen weavers and merchants. They were opposed to the very idea of the fund as being something enimical to the Government and they complained to the authorities from time to time that coercion and intimidation were being resorted to by the organisers of the fund in collecting it. It was alleged that the volunteers carried sticks in the bazar with a view to terronise the opponents of the fund. We have stated elsewhere how far these complaints were well founded. But the differences between the supporters and the opponents of the fund were accentuated by the tactless conduct of some of the Khilafat people in publicly ridiculing the opposing merchants by parading donkeys in the streets with placards round their necks bearing the words 'Don't sell saris to these donkeys'. The ill feeling which was thus generated was deepened by the declaration of a social boycott against the few co-operating weavers and merchants who were opposed to the fund.

(16) Things had thus gradually advanced to a stage when official intervention might be regarded as a handy solution by the co-operators, and it appears that they made complaints to the District authorities both against the volunteers and the organisers of the fund. These complaints brought



Mr Mobedji the Prant Officer to Malegaon for the purpose of making an inquiry into the whole affair, and after full investigation both public and private he declared that no coercion was practised in respect of the Imad ul Islam Fund. Further Mr Mobedji declared at a public meeting that it was not the intention of Government in any way to interfere with the fund so long as its collection did not lead to any breach of peace. This did not evidently satisfy the co-operators who continued their complaints to the authorities—more particularly against the volunteers—and Mr Mobedji had again to go to Malegaon to smooth matters. We are glad to note that throughout his stay at Malegaon in the course of his visits Mr Mobedji's handling of the situation had been particularly fair and tactful although of course we are quite ignorant of the actual reports he made to the Collector of the District in this matter.

(17) In our opinion no coercion was practised in the matter of the Imad ul Islam Fund and in this we have probably the support of the Deputy Collector, Mr Mobedji himself. With regard to the carrying of sticks by the volunteers there is no evidence that they were used for the purpose of coercion. There is also very little reliable evidence to show that the volunteers were at all engaged for the collection of the fund. The collection was done by the special agency of men appointed for the purpose by the managers of the fund. We have been told of a procession in which the volunteers carried sticks but if at all they did so it must obviously be for a spectacular purpose and certainly not for spreading terror among any class of people. No reasonable ground has been shown for apprehension that the volunteers would commit violence with their sticks, and we are inclined to regard the objection to their use as more or less fanciful. In fact, we believe, having failed in their endeavour to stop the Khilafat agita-

tion and the collection of the Imdad Fund the co-operators firmly adhered to this complaint as a mere point of prestige and were insistently urging the authorities to uphold it. The suggestion that the volunteers should carry no sticks had in itself also a plausible colour of reasonableness and on this point therefore all further attempts of the co-operationists were concentrated.

(18) While we are of opinion that no violence or intimidation was practised by the collectors of the fund or by the volunteers, we are bound to say that some of the other activities of the Khilafat workers were not altogether free from blame however slight. We have also some evidence to show that now and then the speeches made at public meetings by some Moulavis were highly inflammatory. It appears that once or twice a volunteer who took a vain delight in affecting a martial-spirit carried even a (sheathed) sword in his belt. It is not suggested that there was an underlying intention to commit violence with the sword but even apart from the possibilities of violence it would be reasonable to object to a demonstrative conduct of that kind in a public movement which made at least a few people uncomfortable. Then again it is admitted that once or twice meetings of children were held in Malegaon in which Khilafat politics was debated upon and poetical compositions were recited which contained not only some very highly strung sentiments but a few positively objectionable words. We are satisfied that some of the leading Non-co-operators disapproved of these latter activities and they were of opinion that the Non-co-operation movement including the collection of the fund should be allowed to proceed without any complication. But differences of opinion arose as to the exact method by which this should be brought about. Some held the view that the intentions of the leaders in the matter should be made clear in

writing so that there may be no mistake about them in the minds of their followers on the one hand and of the authorities on the other. Others took a different view. They laid stress on the point that while the things objected to might be stopped in so far as and if they were practised, there was no necessity to make a public declaration about it. It is difficult to say whether the objectors to a public declaration adverted only to the technical and formal aspect of it, or whether they wanted things to go on as before in a loose and therefore convenient drift so that while legal consequences may be taken of whatever happened there should be no ground for a stigma on them of having done an act or acts in direct violation of the written declaration of the Non-co-operation leaders. It is clear at any rate that the question of a public declaration was not deliberated and voted upon in a formal meeting of the Non-co-operation party, and one section of the leaders probably considering themselves free to do what they thought proper under the circumstances, issued on the 1st of April a manifesto in which while the principles of non violent Non-co-operation were explained at some length a distinct prohibition was promulgated against the following practices viz (1) to attend meetings or parade streets with big sticks and arms (2) to recite anarchical or seditious songs and versical compositions (3) speeches by specially invited lecturers inciting to anarchical principles or outrages (4) use of language likely to wound the feelings of individuals (5) holding meetings of children for political harangues. This conduct on the part of the signatories—11 in number—was openly objected to and criticised by some of the Moulavis and by other Khulafat workers. The signatories to the manifesto on the other hand regarded that they had done a clear duty which they owed not only to themselves but to the party and the principles of Non-co-operation. Those who objected to

the manifesto contended that they entirely agreed with the spirit of the manifesto, but objected to it as superfluous especially that the 11 signatories had not consulted the rest of them before issuing it. It was openly stated before us that the rest of them might have also signed if the manifesto were circulated among them before its publication. But we doubt the statement. We think the non signatories protest rather too much when they say that their only objection lay in the fact that they were neglected. A mistake of that kind could have been easily remedied by a supplementary manifesto, but we believe that the non signatories never wanted a manifesto of that kind.

(19) The eleven signatories thus found themselves in a position of isolation and suspicion. Their position became rather anomalous. Some of the co operators doubted the sincerity of the signatories. One witness expressly stated before us that the manifesto was a mere eye-wash. On the other hand their position was so completely misunderstood by the non-signatories and their followers that they came to be suspected as black legs and tools in the hands of the authorities. And an incident happened on the next day that gave colour to the impression. On the 2nd day of April the authorities of Malegaon published a proclamation issued by the District Magistrate, under the District Police Act (The Proclamation has not been produced before us) by which one specific item in the manifesto viz, the carrying of sticks at public meetings was prohibited. The proclamation, we are told, was really dated the 26th of March. The interval of days between its issue in the Collector's camp and its actual publication in Malegaon cannot be accounted for only by the time necessary for its transmission from one place to the other. The other plausible construction upon this delay is that the authorities wanted a previous Non-official declaration upon

the subject matter of the proclamation in order to strengthen it, when it may appear later on. It may be argued that the Mamlatdar of Malegaon had no choice but was bound to publish the proclamation as soon as he received it, and that even if there was delay in the publication it was due to the course of routine business and not to the contingency of a non-official declaration which was to appear later on. But we are inclined to think that the idea of the non-official declaration must have been mooted some time before the 26th and that both this declaration and the official proclamation must have been simultaneously contemplated. This was all well from the official point of view but it was evidently calculated to put the signatories in a false position. They were either trusted or not trusted. If they were the official proclamation was superfluous and the signatories would be entitled to claim a fair trial of their credit and influence with the Malegaon people. If on the other hand they were not trusted it was unfair to them to be called upon to make such a declaration because it was regarded practically of no use by the authorities themselves. In any case the signatories were prejudiced by the appearance of the official proclamation, in that they led the common people to point a finger of scornful suspicion towards the signatories as men in league with the Government and for which eventually they were on the point of paying. From the day of the official proclamation the signatories to the declaration were under a discount and hardly attended any public meeting and later on one of them was made vicariously to apologise for the supposed sins of the rest. This is not all. They might even have been the first victims of the riot if they were found handy at its commencement and if the Sub Inspector had not succeeded in drawing all the wrath of the rioters upon himself. It has been stated before us that at the commencement of the

not inquiries were made for some of the signatories as men, 'wanted' by the mob and that some of these actually heard future violence threatened upon them by some ruffians while these were seeking safety in some hiding places

(20) We have already stated that in our opinion there were no concrete cases of violence with sticks before the issue of the non-official or the official proclamation and that the former might have been of some value and importance if it had stood by itself. The official proclamation however not only made it worthless for any purpose, but unnecessarily brought to a point the conflict between the upholders and the opponents of sticks and drove the whole dispute about the carrying of sticks into the vortex of the Criminal Law. Yet for a time the good counsels of the signatories prevailed, though their influence had gone and for some time the proclamation was carefully obeyed. But this was not long to continue. Even the volunteers had given up since the date of the proclamation the carrying of sticks in the streets or at meetings, but Moulavi Nazir Ahmed positively advised disobedience to the proclamation as witnesses of all sides have stated before us. It is unfortunate that the loss of influence of the signatories among whom were both Hindu and Mahomedan leaders left the field open for other kind of counsels. Probably the Moulavi had his own interpretation to put on the official proclamation. There are big sticks and small sticks and even the non-official manifesto had made a distinction between big sticks and small sticks. According to the Moulavi again, sticks whether big or small were not arms and if, as his own information is said to have gone, swords were allowed to be carried in the sheaths, the proclamation the Moulavi argued, had no right to prohibit the carrying at least of big sticks. Right or wrong this interpretation was put by the Moulavi on the proclamation. Moreover a sort of a spirit of defiance had

arisen amongst the Khulafat workers, who, bereft of the guidance of the signatories to the manifesto, owing to the slap given to them by the official proclamation were led by the Moulavi without any opposition. Accordingly at the meeting held on the 12th and the 13th of April, some volunteers did carry sticks with them, whereupon the attention of the police was drawn to the violation of the proclamation and prosecutions were decided upon. Some sticks, it is said, were taken possession of by the police but these, we are told did not correspond to the number of the volunteers on duty.

(21) Nothing of importance seems to have happened between this seizure of sticks on the 13th and the day of the hearing of the cases against the volunteers on the 25th. It appears that the volunteers on the morning of the 25th had taken counsel with some of the leaders, who advised them to take things as a matter of course and to pay the fines as they would be naturally very trifling. The mere fact of the prosecution of the volunteers had however, quickened an interest in the Malegaon public and a small crowd had assembled to hear the proceedings in the court; and if the fines imposed upon the accused were really as trifling as they were expected they might, perhaps, have been paid on the spot. It has been suggested to us in the inquiry that there must have been a conspiracy on the part of the Khulafat leaders not to pay any fines however trifling in order to cause trouble. But this is contradicted by the statements of some of the volunteers themselves who were accused in the case and appeared before us as witnesses.

(22) The starting impetus was given to the mob mind that day by the proceedings in the Court during which, in our opinion a number of unfortunate incidents happened one after another. The case was decided by the Magistrate on the evidence of a single police witness as against the denial

of guilt by the accused. But what happened next was the least expected. The first thought of the Magistrate was to impose only light fines on the accused and these might have been possibly paid on the spot. But the Sub-Inspector of Police, who was present as prosecutor in the case, openly intervened and induced the Magistrate to impose substantial fines. Beyond this none of the witnesses who were examined by us, could clearly say what actually happened in the Court. Eventually the accused were convicted and sentenced to pay a fine of Rs. 50 each or in the alternative to go to jail for one month. The accused being either unwilling or unable to pay the fine, were made over to the custody of the police. In the absence of any definite evidence on the point we are not prepared to charge the Magistrate with having actually changed the amount of the fines once definitely uttered in the Court, but we do say that the heavy sentence of fine was due to the insistence of the Sub-Inspector on a deterrent punishment. We further say that the Magistrate would have used his discretion to better purpose if he had allowed the accused time to bring the amount of their fines instead of handing them over straight to the custody of the police for non payment of the fine on the spot. Under the Criminal Procedure Code when an offender has been sentenced to fine only and to imprisonment in default, the Court may instead of sending the accused at once to jail issue a warrant for the recovery of the fine, suspend the execution of the sentence of imprisonment, and release him on signing a personal recognisance so that he may have time to arrange for the payment of the fine. We cannot understand why the trying Magistrate did not adopt the more lenient course. It could not be alleged that the accused would have absconded from Malegaon to evade the payment of fine and thus put the police to the trouble of re-arresting them. The Indian Jails



Committee have expressed an opinion in their report which entirely supports us in our view. They say It seems to be clearly inadvisable that a man should be exposed to the disgrace and risk of contamination involved in committal to jail if his offence is one which would be adequately punished by a fine and if the grant of reasonable time would enable him to pay the fine

(23) The conviction and sentence created quite a sensation among the people present in court. They were mostly friends and the relations of the accused. They evidently resented the action of the Magistrate and the Sub-Inspector. The Secretary of the Khilafat Committee was present in the Court at that time and he does not appear to have made any attempt to pay the fine on behalf of the accused. The result was that the convicts were removed from the Court to the lock up within the Court premises and the crowd left the court in an excited mood. This excitement was turned into anger by the unwise action of the Sub Inspector of Police who tauntingly asked the crowd to pay the fines from the rich Khilafat funds and to look to their leaders on whom they had acted so long for rescue. The crowd was hit by the sarcastic remarks of the Sub Inspector and they turned their anger from the Sub Inspector to the signatories of the manifesto. It is clear from the evidence that the first idea of the crowd was to go back to the town and to call upon the signatories to the manifesto of the 1st of April to secure the release of the convicted volunteers as in the opinion of the crowd the convictions were due to the proclamation and the proclamation in its turn to the manifesto.

(24) It may be safely stated that the first thought of the excited crowd was not to do any harm to the Sub Inspector himself. It happened however that the crowd on its way back met and molested a police constable who was identified as the

man who had helped in depriving the volunteers of their sticks and on the news of this being taken to the Sub Inspector he came with about a dozen armed constables to put matters right. It appears that the Sub Inspector and his party met the crowd near the Motor stand or the Islamic Hotel. Here the crowd gathered round the Sub Inspector but could not arrest his progress. The Sub Inspector took the road to the town *via* the Jumma Masjid. Here again he found himself amidst the crowd and it was here that the first firing took place. We are not quite sure as to whether any stones or brick bats were actually thrown at the Sub Inspector at this place but even if stones were as a matter of fact thrown at the Sub Inspector or his men it does not appear that their lives were in any danger. The firing was no doubt intended to disperse the crowd and only small shots were fired. Several persons in the crowd were injured of whom some gave evidence before us and showed marks of injury. The firing instead of terrorising the mob only exasperated it but even then the Sub Inspector could proceed as far as the corner of Pophale's house. But at this corner he was met by another crowd and being hemmed in between two crowds he had to seek safety in the temple adjoining the house of Mr Pophale.

(25) It is difficult exactly to say what happened thereafter. With a big crowd collected outside the temple and persistent efforts being made to discover and hunt the Sub-Inspector out he might have felt reasonable fear for his life and if he shot or cut down an assailant or two who went in search of him he may be taken to have done so in self-defence. Failing in their attempt to get at the Sub-Inspector the mob eventually set fire to the temple with the result that the adjoining two or three houses were completely burnt down along with the temple. One of the constables was done to death at the

entrance to the temple, the Sub Inspector in trying to escape from the burning house in the guise of a woman to conceal his identity was recognised overpowered and brutally murdered. Late at mid night the bodies of the murdered Sub Inspector and the Policemen were burnt together near the gutter outside the temple.

(26) What happened the next day may only be briefly stated. After the Dafan of the Mahomedans who were killed on the previous night near the temple some persons detached themselves from the big crowd of Momins and proceeded towards the town with the deliberate object of looting. In the meanwhile it appears that out of fear of a renewed riot the convict volunteers in the lock up were released though unfortunately too late. The crowd on this occasion was a mixed crowd and as the evidence before us shows was made up not only of some people who attended the 'Dafan' but also of a considerable number of ruffians from the lowest classes of the population who would any day be out with their fishing rods on the news of troubled waters anywhere.

(27) It remains for us to state the conclusions we have arrived at as the result of our inquiry. They may be briefly stated as follows —

(1) The Malegaon riots however tragic do not appear to have been premeditated. Mr. Kashikar, president of the Malegaon Municipality, stated before us that he had apprehended some trouble sooner or later from the activities of the Non-co-operators but such a vague and general statement can always be easily made about a movement with which one is not in agreement. The co-operators, the Anti Khilafatists and lastly the eleven signatories of the manifesto had all earned the displeasure of the extreme wing of the Khilafat workers. But that itself conclusively shows that there could have been no set conspiracy against any one of them in part.

cular The utmost that even Mr Kashikar could have predicted, would be but a spontaneous outburst of some sort at any unexpected moment But that modicum of risk or danger of public inflammation can be said to be present in any vigorous popular movement, especially if it becomes somebody's business to oppose it Mr Kashikar's estimate does not take it out of the common category of movements in which a prediction of that kind can always be safely made, though the elements of premeditation might be altogether absent We are quite clear in our mind that the only deliberate action openly calculated to cause trouble of some kind was the carrying of sticks by some volunteers after the proclamation But it is too much to say that either he who gave the advice to disobey the proclamation or those who followed him in the matter could have even by a stretch of imagination, adverted to any of the events which actually happened on the 25th or the 26th April last

(2) We will now proceed to apportion the blame for the events of the two days as between the authorities and the Khilafat people

(i) Dealing first with the authorities we are bound to say, and we have already said it, that the conduct of the Prant Officer, and presumably that of the Collector also was on the whole fair, tactful and conciliatory In this connection we cannot do better than give one quotation from the statement made before us by Mr Khare the President of the local Taluka Congress Committee and we may say that our own view is generally in agreement with that of Mr Khare —

"I am prepared to say that in this unfortunate affair Government officials have consistently acted with extraordinary restraint! They never put any obstacles in the way of the Non-co-operators and generally their attitude was praiseworthy"

The authorities must have watched the Non-co-operation movement at Malegaon for a long time with certain expectations at the back of their mind. But they did not spread the net for any trouble. We can conceive what anxious cogitations the Co-operators and the Anti Khilafatists must have exchanged with the Government officers when they had interviews on the matter, but toleration and marking time seem to have been apparently the course resolved upon by them. Just as there is no evidence of conspiracy about the man slaughter or arson in this riot, so also there is no evidence pointing to an official conspiracy to bring matters to a head. The authorities might not have implicitly believed in all the wild fears conjured up by the opponents of Non co-operation about the consequences of the Khilafat movement or even the use of sticks by the volunteers for the purpose of coercing the Anti Khilafatists. But we think it is natural that they should regard it their duty to take some sort of action likely to give a public indication of the knowledge of what was passing in Malegaon and some sort of assurance of protection to those who may need it. However, all that Mr Mobedji did was on the whole conciliatory and tactful. The question is whether with the advent of Mr Simcox as the Collector of the District, the official policy underwent a change. We have before us evidence on both sides of the question but not enough on either side to justify a clear cut opinion. Having said this we cannot help stating that the official proclamation forbidding the carrying of sticks in public was unnecessary and premature. We suspect that the authorities themselves knew that it was so, but they apparently issued it as a concession to the clamour of the Anti-Khilafatists. If that was the fact it was manifestly an excessive and mischievous concession. At any rate it

should have been issued a long time after, that is, after a fair trial was given to the operation of the non official manifesto which is absolutely clear in its enunciations of the principle and methods of Non-co-operation and, in our opinion marks the triumph of the conciliatory spirit exhibited on either side. The official proclamation was therefore in our opinion, the first distinct contributory factor of unwise action in this affair on the part of the authorities.

(ii) The next factor in our opinion was the attitude of both the Sub Inspector and the Magistrate in the Court. We feel almost sure in our minds that the crowd in the Court would have left the premises unperturbed if the convicted volunteers had been allowed to go back to the town to try and collect the amount of the fines imposed on them.

(iii) The last contribution from the official side came from the Sub Inspector himself in the firing near the Masjid which was unnecessary if meant only for the dispersion of the crowd. It is of course a speculation what would have happened if this firing had not taken place and if the Sub Inspector had only parleyed with the crowd and had assured them of the immediate release of the volunteers on payment of fine. But we must obviously leave it there.

(iv) On the non official side we cannot blame the Khilafat workers for the invitation given to the Moulavis for it is everywhere the experience that strangers infuse more spirit into the population of a locality than the local leaders. The language and the sentiments of the Moulavi's speeches were their own affair, and they would have certainly taken the consequences if they had really spoken sedition and were prosecuted. If every organiser of lectures and every member of the audience were to be held responsible for the language of the speakers, there would be an end to all organisation and to all public meetings. So long as Gov-

ernment took no action against the Moulavis the Malegaon Khulafatists were justified in assuming that they were not exceeding the legal limits of speech, but even so far as mute caution was necessary on the part of the leaders, it was evident in the condition imposed upon the "Imdad Fund," that it could not be spent upon the visits of outside lecturers. We have already expressed our opinion that the use of sticks or arms was not carried to a point at which its prohibition by a proclamation had become necessary. Nor are we inclined seriously to blame the opponents of the manifesto for expressing some sort of dissatisfaction with it as there were two views among the people as to its propriety. If the Khulafatists had implicitly obeyed the proclamation and had thereby avoided all subsequent trouble their grievance about the manifesto would have deserved appreciation. But in an evil moment they decided upon conniving at the disobedience of the proclamation, and on the non official side, therefore we regard this as the first distinct contributory factor to the eventual riot. The crisis was all but reached at the end of the volunteers' trial in the Court. We believe that it was the duty of the officials of the Khulafat Committee to keep some money ready in their pockets to pay off the fines of the volunteers, and we must note that even after the declaration of the substantial fines they did not intervene or actually work for the release. The signatories of the manifesto had obviously no duty to discharge in this respect, because it was entirely the affair of those who had disobeyed the proclamation and the manifesto or had connived at the disobedience.

(v) Coming to the latter stage of the riot, we cannot say whether any Non-co-operators were present among the active rioters. The actual killing of the Sub-Inspector

and the arson were absolutely unjustifiable from any point of view. The issue of the proclamation, the trial of the volunteers, their conviction and sentence, the unwise taunt by the Sub Inspector—not all these could, under any circumstances, be called provocation of any kind justifying or even extenuating the mob excesses. Even assuming that the policy of 'measure for measure' proved for the moment more dominant over the minds of the rioters there was nothing in the conduct of the Sub-Inspector to deserve death, the blank firing notwithstanding, as it had not led to any loss of life. The arson stands on the same footing as the killing. We know the Mahomedan rioters wavered for a time before they set fire to the Hindu temple but they eventually succumbed to the temptation. From the point of view of the Hindu-Moslem unity which should, if anything, reinforce the discipline of non-violence, they should have thought more of the outrage on the feelings of the Hindu and also of the sacrilege they were committing to a holy Hindu shrine, than of the asylum which would be given to even an offending opponent, and should have left the temple alone.

(vi) Now we come to the looting of the houses of the co-operators and this we consider to be in some respects even an uglier feature of the situation than the horrible events of the previous day. Twelve hours had elapsed between the riotous action over night and the looting on the 26th; the authors of the loot had evidently slept over the temper of the previous night and there was no logical connection between even the sentiments raised by the "Dafan" on the morning of the 26th and the act of looting particular houses or any houses at all. The looters had not behind them the same urging momentum of the mob mind on the 26th as the perpetrators of the killing and burning may be



said to have had. There is also no doubt in our minds that the looting was almost wholly confined to the houses of the co-operators and the Anti Khilafatists—a fact of which the significance is unmistakable.

(vii) We have nothing but praise for the courage, sincerity and earnestness of Non-co-operation leaders at Malegaon, both Hindu and Mahomedans. They scrupulously adhered in word and deed to their creed of Truth and Non violence and although in doing so they incurred the displeasure of the extreme Khilafatists led by the Moulavis they never wavered for one moment from following the right course. We do think that in issuing their manifesto of the 1st April they played into the hands of the authorities but that only shows their extreme anxiety to keep the movement strictly within the bounds of non violence. As a result they gradually lost all influence with the majority of the Khilafatists and at the crucial moment they found themselves absolutely powerless to save the situation.

(viii) Without intending to minimise in the smallest measure the enormity of the crimes of murder, arson and looting, or to plead for any consideration to any individual who may be found guilty in a proper judicial trial we do not think that the happenings of the 25th and 26th April while they undoubtedly brought serious discredit on the Non-co-operators at Malegaon and have thereby given a set back to the Non-co-operation movement, can support any reflection against the whole movement as such. All that they show is that the movement passed in one locality into the hands of certain persons who had not fully understood its implications. In every place, Non-co-operators should exercise a ceaseless vigilance in carrying on their propaganda and also in the selection of their

workers We strongly recommend that in future only duly authorised speakers should be allowed to address the public from all Non-co-operation platforms No popular movement, however, can be guaranteed to be eternally free from incidents of this nature, for rather than the movement itself sinning it is often sinned against by some people who join it without entering into its true spirit, and yet who cannot be prevented from doing so for the simple reason that no conclusive test of temper can be enforced upon any one before his admission into it The misdeeds of a few, however, are an exception which only prove the rule laid down by the untarnished conduct of the many in any movement

Bombay,                 }  
28th July, 1921 }

N C KELKAR,  
*Chairman*

### THE PRINCE AND POONA\*

An interesting programme has been published of the engagements made by the Bombay Government for H R H. the Prince of Wales when he visits Poona on the 19th November It includes two important ceremonies and one entertainment The first ceremony relates to the unveiling of a War Memorial to the Maratha heroes who died in the Great Armageddon The second relates to the laying of the foundation stone of a Memorial to Shivaji The entertainment is a social affair, though it is mixed up with the sports and manœuvres of troops

Who has any doubt that the Bombay Government will spare neither pains nor money to make the reception to the Prince a fitting one? But a non-official naturally feels more

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\* *Mahratta*, 2nd. October 1921.

concerned with the part or lot which the politically minded democracy may have in that reception. The desire of the Government and their human instruments that the public should enthusiastically join in the reception is quite natural. But people too have to look at the matter from their own point of view. In the first place, the All India Congress Committee has distinctly promulgated a prohibition against any participation by Congressmen in the reception of the Prince. Even in the absence of such an interdiction, the interest felt by the Indian people would have only been of a casual character, and would not have had any political significance. Sight seeing is naturally regarded as a legitimate popular privilege and the visit of the heir apparent to the British imperial throne is bound to be an attractive sight, especially as Government can command the spectacular genius among the people and also the ways and means of its practical display.

But the Royal and gracious Prince would be nothing to the people from the point of view of real affection or sentimental loyalty. The Prince is related to India only through the British Government, which has a being and a status merely *as established by law*, to use the exact constitutional phraseology in the matter. And real affection or true sense of *Mamata* to use a Sanskrit classical word, is a thing which no law with the most powerful sanction behind it can command. The British Government is a foreign Government and the Prince is a foreign Prince. Of course he is a high class gentleman who may be privately received in India as one gentleman by another, and Indian people are admittedly noted for their courtesy and hospitality. But the very fact that Government want to make political capital out of the Prince's visit (and thus we say in spite of Lord Reading's deliberate utterance to the contrary) naturally brings in also the command of the Congress and makes it relevant.

The Prince would be doing what he believes, and what Government assiduously make him believe, to be an act in the nature of a manifestation of gratitude in raising a War Memorial to the dead Maratha heroes. But there is also another side to it. If the Maratha soldiers be regarded merely as military employees, that is to say, the hirelings that did the work they were paid for, then such a bombastic sentiment as that of gratitude becomes out of place, even when they died in the course of their duty. They were not so many of them benefactors but mere 'casualties'. But if they did something which merits anything beyond a widow's pension, then the needs of the case cannot be satisfied by the mere raising of a cenotaph or a stone-pillar. Maharashtra will regard them as having died in vain, if they cannot bring, by their death, better justice to the claims of the present and future generations of Maratha soldiers, in point of military rank and status.

It is notorious that none of the brave heroes, to whose memory the Prince would raise this memorial, could have aspired to any rank higher than that of Subedar-Major or Risaldar-Major. But what is thus the pinnacle or climax of military glory for an Indian sepoy is only the humblest beginning of a British soldier. And herein precisely lies our point when we say that Government can, if they mean to choose a more suitable and satisfactory method of showing recognition to the services of Maratha soldiers, that have either died for them before or may die hereafter. We are all bearing of the Indianisation of military services, and the present disabilities of Indian soldiers in the matter of their status indicate the lowest water mark. One, therefore, naturally feels that the Prince of Wales should be enabled to do for the Maratha regiments something more substantial than raising a stone memorial.

It is a happy augury that the Prince will be requested to lay the foundation-stone of a 'Shivaji memorial' in Poona. So Nemesis is after all coming up mounted on the whirl-gig of time to punish those who once had the impudence to characterise Shivaji as a Mountain Rat and a 'bloody robber.' But even that cannot induce some people to join in the reception of the Prince as they know that the Prince is coming out not for the sake of this memorial but for fortifying the throne of the bureaucracy in India. The most appreciable form of a Shivaji memorial for Marathas at the hands of the Prince would be Swarajya. And we shall know how to receive the Prince when he comes with that munificent gift in his hand.

In saying all this we mean not the slightest personal discourtesy to the Prince. One can think of nothing but *congratulations to the heir apparent to an Empire which* affects the destinies of such a big slice of the entire humanity on earth. And one can wish him nothing but success in his prospective task of ruling over that Empire if only he means to put that Empire to a new, that is to say, a less selfish or more altruistic use on behalf of the handful of Britishers in a corner of that Empire. Further we are quite sure that though the Indian people may not be willing to enthusiastically receive the Prince they are less scornful towards the Royal House of Britain than were the British people themselves towards this House of Hanover when it first came to occupy the British throne. If you turn to Thackeray's 'Four Georges' you will find that Englishmen were burning with indignation in their hearts as they were outwardly doing homage to George I when he came over to England from Germany. Many openly confessed to a disappointment at the early death of Queen Anne, for had she lasted a month longer a German usurper would never have talked German in

Saint Jame's Chapel Royal. Says Thackeray in depicting the sentiments of Englishmen at the time—"Oh, the King we had selected, the courtiers who came in his train, the English nobles who came to welcome him—I protest it is a wonderful satirical picture! I am a citizen, say, waiting at Greenwich Pier and crying Hurrah for King George, and yet I can scarcely keep my countenance and help laughing at the enormous absurdity of this advent. The great Whig gentlemen made their bows and congees with proper decorum and ceremony, but yonder keen old schemer knows the value of their loyalty. 'Loyalty' he must think, as applied to me,—it is absurd! There are fifty nearer heirs to the throne than I am. I am but an accident, and you fine Whig gentlemen take me for your own sake and not mine. You Tories hate me, you Archbishop smirking on your knees, and prating about Heaven, you know I do not care a fig for your thirty nine articles, and can't understand a word of your stupid sermons. You, My Lord Bolinbroke and Oxford, you know you were conspiring against me a month ago; and you, My Lord Duke of Marlborough,—you could sell me or any man else, if you found your advantage in it. Come my good Melusina, let us make the best of our situation. Let us take what we can get and leave these bawling, brawling, lying English to shout and fight and cheat in their own way."

For indeed the heart of the German king was in Hanover. The English took him because they wanted him and because he served their turn. They laughed at his uncouth German ways and sneered at him. The foreign Prince also took their loyalty for what it was worth, laid hands on such money as he could, the only good service he did was to keep them from 'popery and wooden shoes'. And this anti German feeling did not abate till the last century. For when the Prince Consort, *etc.*, the husband of Queen Victoria, went to England,

people bawled out songs in the street indicative of the absurdity of Germany in general. And one can safely bring the history of this anti royal feeling almost up-to-date, thanks to the Great War. Happily for Indians, they can have no such bitterly racial grudge against the Royal House. For German or English it is the same to them so far as the Royal House is not Indian. But in these days of democracy even genuine Indian Royal Houses are at a discount. For they have been scandalously sinning against the new spirit. Our attitude towards the Prince of Wales, therefore, is a simple one, namely of indifference. He cannot assuredly evoke active sentimental loyalty in us but at the same time we do not feel the dislike we do for some of our own Princes and Rajahs whom we happen to know more intimately. And for that reason though we, as Congressmen need not actively organise any anti reception demonstrations, we are also not under any legal or moral obligation to join in the reception even to such an exalted personage as the Prince of Wales.

## THE PRESENT SITUATION \*

Every curve has a definite point of culmination, and the curve of bureaucratic repression is now nearing that point. In the early days of non-co-operation Government used to pretend that they could afford to ignore the new movement and to let the sturdy commonsense of the people themselves crush that agitation under its own stupendous weight. That policy has now definitely undergone a change. Government have stultified themselves by resorting to wholesale repression, and even the elaborate speeches of Lord Reading do not throw any convincing light on the main spring of official action.

HIS Excellency contents that the so-called repression is nothing but the necessary consequence of the conduct of Non co-operators themselves who break laws and regulations and thus force arrest, conviction and imprisonment on Government, or commit acts which are likely to cause intimidation or breach of peace. This, however, is not an accurate statement of the situation. We can quote instances of prosecutions which were not sought but imposed. It is impossible to conceive of a milder speech in these times than the one made by my friend Mr G B Deshpande in due course as President of the Karnatak Provincial Conference. And yet the Executive Council of H E the Governor of Bombay including, I presume, such legal luminaries as Sir Chumanlal Setalwad and Mr Hayward, sanctioned his prosecution simply to satisfy the animus of the Dharwad Collector, Mr Painter. As for the suppression of the several Volunteer Corps the initiative rested with government themselves. And who but Government, again, are responsible for the arbitrary operation of the seditious meetings Act?



Nor need I dwell upon the orders in Thana and Poona against picketing of liquor shops' My point is that whereas no grievance can be and was I think, ever made about prosecutions of individuals for individual offences there is every reason for stigmatising the present wholesale and varied operation of the criminal law preventive and punitive as nothing but repression pure and simple

Lord Reading naturally does not like that ugly word 'Repression' applied to his actions In fact he is making painfully desperate attempts to wriggle out of that application But the whole body of non official Indian opinion including even Moderates and Co-operators who have no love lost for Mahatma Gandhi and would do any thing to crush the Non-co-operation movement has declared with one voice that the present policy is a policy of repression and that it is an unwise policy And what Mr Morley wrote to Lord Minto in August, 1907, holds equally good in December, 1921 Says Mr Morley I have often told you of my wicked thought that Strafford was an ideal type both for Governor of Ireland in the seventeenth century and the Governor of India in the twentieth century Only they cut off poor Strafford's head and his idea of Government has been in mighty disfavour ever since We have had in India periodical reincarnations of Strafford and this time Lord Strafford reappears in Lord Reading's form

Lord Reading's special plea is that there is besides the operation of the Repressive Laws, another string to the bow with which he means to kill the unrest in India But while we have been receiving in a painfully concrete form the effects of repression the benefits of His Excellency's progressive policy seem to be as distant as ever The latest semi-official news from London is not particularly reassuring in this matter.

In the meanwhile what should the people do? Some are proposing a round table conference with the Viceroy. But this is counting without the host. The Viceroy no doubt can spare time for the purpose but he is not expected to take the initiative as his address even at Calcutta he would think must be well known! Well intentioned people may be found to make a move in the matter but I doubt whether any good purpose can be served seeking conference at this moment. There is however one thing which can be commended and is thoroughly practicable. It is that the ranks of the Nationalist party should be closed and made staunch and impregnable. Mahatma Gandhi seems to have favoured an invitation as guests to those Nationalists who cannot attend as delegates to the Ahmedabad Congress. And it would be desirable to focus Nationalist opinion for the moment on the one policy of civil disobedience so that it should alone hold the field as a reply to repression so long as Government may deem it fit to continue the same. No doubt there are and there will remain differences of opinion as to some items of the Non co operation programme and Mahatma Gandhi will certainly consider the advisability of taking private counsel with those nationalist friends who have either stood aside or being within the Congress have consistently and freely voiced their differing opinion about the N C O programme. But the success of the policy of civil disobedience throughout India must be a first charge on the deliberations of the All India Congress Committee. This is a psychological moment for Mahatma Gandhi as well as his friends who differ from him and I sincerely trust that that moment would be seized by both to make the Congress Nationalist party more comprehensive and even more efficient for the purpose of giving battle to the bureaucracy during the ensuing year.

## THE POLITICAL SEE SAW \*

The coming seasonal spring bids fair to usher in piping times of peace for India. The consequential rest has been richly deserved by Mahatma Gandhi more than any body else. He has however intended the change not for himself but only to benefit others in their endeavour to establish an atmosphere of peace in the country. For himself endowed as he is with an absolutely unruffled temper and a deeply ingrained habit of non violence in thought deed and language, he required no change in the Congress programme. He lives as if he had always placed one foot within the jail and bared his bosom to the military bully's bullet. For him the prosecution of mass civil disobedience had no terrors. But it was otherwise with others. Mahatma Gandhi feared a double infection to supervene the inauguration of mass civil disobedience in Bardoli: the infection first of the spirit of violence from Chauri Chaura into Gujerathi and the infection in the second place of the spirit of mass civil disobedience from Bardoli into other provinces. When drafting his ultimatum to the Viceroy Mahatma Gandhi had no doubt satisfied himself that there was no such fear of infection either way. But the doings of the Chauri Chaura mob apparently upset all his calculations and made a complete reversal of his policy imperative though for the time being only. For once the Mahatma has done his Anglo-Indian critics the honour to agree with them by admitting that he was walking with a lighted torch in hand on the mouth of a mine stuffed with gun powder. For once during the last eighteen months he has acknowledged that his critics were right while he alone was wrong in this respect. His critics are of course not satisfied even with this. They point out that the direct action of civil

disobedience is simply suspended and not for ever abandoned. But to satisfy his critics on all points of contact is simply impossible even for Mahatma Gandhi

Direct action is the supreme sanction which any people in the world can claim for themselves to support their resistance to their rulers in a political struggle. And though the Mahatma could have taken on himself alone the responsibility for stopping or suspending civil disobedience in Bardoli, he could not have, even as the Dictator that he is, gone back upon the principle enunciated by the Ahmedabad Congress that civil disobedience is the only civilised and effective substitute for an armed rebellion whenever every other remedy for preventing arbitrary, tyrannical and emasculating use of authority by individuals or corporations has been tried. The temporary set back which the reversal of Mahatmaji's policy has given to the Non-co operation movement, will no doubt be resented by many people who look at politics only as politics and not a hotch potch of rights and righteousness, and patriotism and piety, and incarcerations and incantations, and legislation and liturgy, and so on. But these have still, we take it, the willing assurance of Mahatmaji that though he has banished civil disobedience out of sight he has not banished it out of mind. It must, however, be admitted even by Mahatma Gandhi that his second attempt to raise the storm in the old fashion will be necessarily more difficult than the first. His policy of shocks and jerks has once more snapped the chain of sustained and coherent activity, and though we have otherwise the same old programme of the Charaka, the Khaddar, the Congress membership and the collection of the Tilak Swarajya Fund, still the main-spring of motive for action will not be so vigorous or bubbling as it was before, when there was an active preaching of the direct action as the spear-point of agitation, and the winning of

Swarajya within a definite period was the professed objective. A retreat, we know, is sometimes as essential as advance on the field of battle. But it must be admitted that in retirement the goal becomes more distant with every step. And this disheartens the soldier though it makes no difference to the General himself.

There is still another consideration which weighs with those who cannot go in raptures over the supposed wisdom of the sudden reversal by Mahatma Gandhi of his own previous policy. In the first place, it becomes difficult for the admirers, like ourselves, of Mahatma Gandhi to rebut the charge of an unsteady mentality which has been levelled against him by his critics. Swift decisions involving complete somersaults of policy have an unpleasantly recoiling effect at least upon the uninitiated, under which category come at present a very large mass of Indian humanity. An unsteady mentality, being by no means better than subtlety of mind, has this distinct disadvantage that it cannot like mental subtlety always keep the ground ready for action, though necessarily modified in the light of the latest information or developments. The retort may come that the world does not believe in a subtle mind which is ready to adjust itself to kaleidoscopic variations in its surroundings. But not less crushing can be the counter retort that the world cannot keep reliance also on an unsteady mind. The subtle mind has the capacity of ever bringing itself abreast of a new situation, it always maintains a suitable margin for back-sliding or side-sliding which is never gross and cannot therefore be easily detected. The unsteady mind however can only stampede in retreat as in advance, which is bound to have an instant demoralising effect. Of course it is not easy to command a choice between the unsteady mind and the subtle mind. But it is at any rate to discriminate between the merits of either.

There is one thing which, we think, we can legitimately say to Mahatma Gandhi without swerving by an inch from the spirit of reverence which we entertain for him, or detracting by an iota from the allegiance we have willingly given to him as the foremost Indian political leader of the day. It is this, that if Mahatmajī must inaugurate a reversal of policy, he might have done it with as much grace as profit when the Conference of the leaders of the different political parties had met in Bombay, and all excepting the closest adherents of Mahatmajī were requesting, nay even beseeching him on their knees, to cry halt to the more aggressive of the N. C. O. activities, in order that they may be enabled to compel the Viceroy to call a Round Table Conference, or in the alternative to put him in the wrong in the eyes of the whole world. That indeed was a golden opportunity not only for retreat, if any was necessary in relation to Government, but also for placating his adverse non-official critics, who were eager to receive a call for co-operation with them by Mahatmajī, and even ready in their own way to make common cause with him in a counter-offensive against official repression. They would have liked to do a good turn to one for whose character they entertained a high regard, and cooperation once more with whom might have been regarded by them as a privilege after parting company with him for the past few years.

The claim which these friends had put forward, or a reconsideration of his policy by Mahatmajī, was certainly based on nothing but an anxiously considered view of public interest; and his willing self-surrender then might certainly have produced a more abiding effect upon our Moderate friends than his present somersault can possibly have upon the hooligans at Chauri Chaura. Thinned as already are the ranks of the Moderates, Mahatma Gandhi would have completed the rout by one more act of his famous courtesy to his

opponents With one more attack with his sweet graciousness he would have captured the whole lot of stragglers and led them in chains in his triumphal march to the Round Table Conference But precisely as an irony of fate would have it Mahatmaji then chose to be adamant almost to the point of discourtesy and insistent to the point of perversity He would not then budge even an inch from his position, though valid references to the mob mentality of India based on the happenings in Malabar, Malegaon and Bombay, were being vigorously rubbed into him and almost a pitiable appeal was being made to Gandhiji that he may not thwart their supreme efforts and ripening designs to bring about a Round Table Conference But far from accommodating them on the lines they wanted him to do, he even frightened them by an untimely and unnecessary exposition of the ultimate demands that he must press at the Round Table Conference It was then easy for any one, and also it might have been legitimate for any one, to question him point blank as to how far and in what way he had satisfied himself about the Bardoli Taluqa having fulfilled the rigorous nay almost impracticable, conditions which he had imposed upon any people who would venture upon mass civil disobedience But no opponents of his thought it worth their while to do so Who can prevent them now from twisting the position if they liked that the Bardoli experiment is now given up, not so much for the Chauri Chaura tragedy, as for the gross unreadiness of the Taluqa for its task which Mahatmaji might have detected on the spot in Bardoli They might, if they liked say that there is really no choice between the present precipitate retreat from and the former equally precipitate advance towards, mass civil disobedience That they would not, however, blame Gandhiji for his present action from other motives is quite another matter.

Between them and Gandhiji therefore it is they who have come out triumphant with this advantage to them moreover, that whereas they would have, at the Bombay Conference conceded a lot to him by way of party support in the event of the Viceroy and not Mahamatji being in the wrong in respect of a Round Table Conference they can now leave Mahamaji to his fate and refuse to make any terms To applaud Mahatma Gandhi for his high moral aims is on the present occasion for them quite enough to save themselves from the necessity of entering into any inconvenient obligations The justification both for the applauders and the applauded must now rest solely in the hands of the Viceroy and both of them can now do nothing better than helplessly look for a sign from him We know that a little graciousness on the part of Lord Reading will now undeservedly go a long way to present him in good colours to the whole world on the back ground of the official avowal of readiness all along the line from Calcutta to London to inaugurate the sternest and severest punitive measures against Mahatma Gandhi and his Congress party But between Mahatma Gandhi and the conveners of the Bombay R T Conference both having failed to do the right thing at the right moment the Viceroy would be entitled to disregard both of them with equal disdain But we do not like to conjure up any unnecessarily gloomy prospects We were prepared for both the Prince and the Viceroy doing nothing to conciliate the people and whatever we may think for the moment of the wisdom of Mahitmajis reversal of policy we have full faith in the collective wisdom and patriotism of India and we firmly believe that the temporary set back received at Bardoli will be soon met with a counterblast somewhere else Politics may well be described as a game of see-saw and every Down therein must have a corresponding Up to it Of one thing



we are supremely glad in all this bad business, that Mahatmajl has definitely given up his idea of retiring to the Himalayas. He is and we want him ever to be with us. For out of the political faith of some and the righteousness of others in India we may still hope to distil an elixir that will once more invigorate India enough to recommence the jolted advance towards freedom.

### THE 'CHRONICLE' AND MAHARASHTRA \*

We have been deriving nothing but amusement from the declamatory outbursts recently appearing in the *Bombay Chronicle* against its latest pet aversion—Maharashtra. But, knowing as we do, the real source of its inspiration and the fact that the paper is being conducted in the interests of what is practically a *conclave within a conclave*, we know also what value to put upon its reckless aspersions upon Maharashtra. Mr M R Jayakar was, we believe a director of the *Chronicle* at one time, and when he has to suffer misrepresentation at the hands of that journal in the present fashion, what reason is there to expect that its treatment of Maharashtra would be more charitable? As regards our differences with the *Chronicle* on the point of the detailed programme of Non-co-operation, we do not wish to enter into an argument at this moment. For the differences are well known and expressed on either side from time to time in an ample manner, from the advent itself of the non-co-operation movement.

In the present place, we should like only briefly to refer to the supremely ridiculous plea that the *Chronicle* has advanced in its article of Thursday last in denouncing Maharashtra.

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\**Mahratta*, 2nd July, 1922

The plea is that the underlying motive of the Maharashtra leaders in expressing their differences as to the details of the Non-co-operation programme is to kill the movement, and, to quote the exact words of the *Chronicle*, 'to make Poona once more the head and the heart of India and revive the glory of Maharashtra at the point, it was interrupted at, of the last Bajirao'. The *Chronicle* further extends its gracious patronage to these leaders and assures them that it has no quarrel with such ambition of Maharashtra which it declares, is quite natural and is bound to arouse the sympathy of every patriotic Indian! But we frankly tell our contemporary that, while gratefully acknowledging its good intentions in this respect, we feel bound to give a direct contradiction to it on every one of the points included in this benevolently mischievous paragraph. For we do assert, and in this we are speaking the real mind of the whole of Maharashtra, that it has never been, is not, and shall never be the ambition of Maharashtra to make Poona the head and heart of India at the expense of any other Indian province or nationality, much less to revive the glory of Maharashtra at the point and on the lines of the rules of the Peshwas. And, in fact, we shall be surprised if the rest of India did *not* quarrel with this ambition of Maharashtra, if really it had that in its mind. We go further and say it should be unnatural if the Maharashtra leaders of Poona and elsewhere were to entertain such an ambition and the rest of India to tolerate it in these days of broad Indian nationalism. The bedrock of the real situation is that Maharashtra never entertained such an ambition. It is well known that the late Mr M. G. Ranade was cosmopolitan at heart. Mr. G. K. Gokhale was an All-India politician. And although Mr. Tilak was sometimes accused of provincial tendencies, his life-work, it is now admitted, consisted in pushing forward the cause of Indian Nationalism.

as a whole rather than his provincial ambition. And on this point we are sure that we can do nothing better than quote Sir Valentine Chirol who truly described Tilak when he called him the Father of Indian Unrest. Many things have been said against Lok Tilak but they never included the charge against him that he wanted to force his provincial ideals in politics upon the rest of India. If he really wanted to restore the rule of the Peshwas he would never have been acclaimed an all India leader. At any rate all misunderstandings about him ceased when the political mind of the rest of India itself was developed to that high pitch of national Indian sentiment where alone it became possible to be in unison with the spirit of Lok Tilak and impossible to misunderstand him.

Leaving Lok Tilak, we can say the same thing with even greater certitude about lesser lights in Maharashtra. Those who know Mr Jayakar or Mr N C Kelkar would at once proclaim it as rank blasphemy that any of them should be characterized as aspiring to restore the Peshwa rule or to help the aggrandisement of provincial sentiment. And if a retort were allowed to us we may straightway observe that men like Messrs Jayakar and Kelkar are certainly less provincial or narrow minded than some of the Mahomedan leaders indigenous or converts are pan Islamic. The application of the sword of Mustafa Kamal Pasha to cut the gordian knot of Indian politics is the exact antithesis in point of ridiculousness and absurdity to the restoration of the Bajirao on the Poona Gadi. But it requires a little more enlightened and critical mind than the *Chronicle* possesses to perceive that it is a profitless game to attribute motives, or that at any rate it is a game at which more than one can easily play. The *Bevelay Chronicle* founded by Sir P.M. Melia a truly cosmopolitan Parsee and financed by

many Catholic Hindus, is, it is notorious, now run more in the interests of Pan Islamism than the *Mahratta* or the *Kesari*, founded by Brahmins, are in the interests of the Peshwas' rule

It requires an amount of sense and sensibility to see that if certain Maharashtra leaders suggest certain modifications in the detailed programme of Non co-operation, it may be possible to do so without any advertance in their mind to Maharashtra supremacy. In fact, the modifications actually suggested are such that they have nothing under the sun which can be called peculiar to Maharashtra. They have an essentially All-India aspect, and it is for that reason that support for them is to be found, though of course in a measured degree for the moment, in other provinces also. Surely Bengal cannot be called in any way less provincial in its tendencies than Maharashtra—and we mean legitimate provincial tendencies when we say so. But if it be a fact that both Bengal and Maharashtra support certain changes in the Congress programme with one mind, no more independent testimony should be asked for, or can be given to prove the proposition that the modifications demanded are really an all India affair.

Maharashtra leaders are perfectly aware that in the enactment of the National political drama, the scene of action must change while the essential unity may remain, and one set of *dramatis personæ* must take the place of another set when the scene so changes. But we warn our contemporaries that it is yet too soon to speak of the end of 'the predestined course' and the world shall not wonder if, in course of time, it found that what some of the Maharashtra leaders now suggest is not only free from the taint of provincial ambition but is really conceived in a truer and broader vision of the political ideal of India than some of the blind

advocates of the so-called constructive programme or the disguised advocates of pan-Islamism, are proclaiming from the house tops. It may be a good stick to beat the intellectual dissentients with to label or denounce them as 'rebels,' but we are sure that the so-called Maharashtra rebels are really doing more to push the cause of true Indian Nationalism as conceived by the Congress, than some of the boastful devotees of the programme, which, on a closer examination, would be found to be observed more in the breach than in the observance. The greater enemy of the Congress is one who parrot like repeats the formulae of Non-co-operation without proportional conformity in action, than the one who courageously proclaims his differences while faithfully carrying out the essentials, though he may be hiding his lights out of a sheer sense of modesty.

### STATEMENT BY MR N C KELKAR,\*

*President, Maharashtra Provincial Congress Committee,*

IN REPLY TO THE QUESTIONAIRE OF THE ENQUIRY  
COMMITTEE

### CONSTRUCTIVE PROGRAMME

(1) Some of the items of the constructive programme will certainly be helpful to strengthen the Congress organisations. But a too rigid insistence on all the items of the programme at one and the same time for all manner of men, besides being unnecessary for leading up to practical civil disobedience is likely to come in the way of the Congress organisations becoming numerically as strong as is desirable.

(2) The completion of the whole constructive programme

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\**Mahratta* 20th July, 1922

is obviously a question of years. But while on the one hand I do not admit that it is the only way to win Swarajya, I do not quite see, on the other hand, how some of the items will have to be continued 'even after getting Swarajya'. The means of obtaining Swarajya may be different from those of keeping it.

I shall take a few instances. Non-Violence may be necessary at present, because one act of violence leads to another on either side, and considering the physical resources of the Government and the people, one can easily realise that the people are bound to suffer more than Government in any popular demonstration of violence. Violence in the present conditions not only may not hasten, but even retard the Swarajya movement. But once Swarajya is obtained the control of the military will pass from the hands of the bureaucracy to those of the people and the use and even maintenance of military troops will clash against the principle of non violence. In fact, one of the cardinal demands for Swarajya is the control of the army, and I cannot imagine that the National Congress, even if it may remain in existence after we get Swarajya, will pass a resolution to require the Government to disband all the State troops in as much as they would be an obvious embodiment of the principle of violence.

Another instance will be that of Khaddar. We value Khaddar to some extent because it *unmistakably* replaces foreign cloth because, that is to say, we think it serviceable as a political weapon. Mahatma Gandhi discovered some of the Sovereign virtues of the Charkha after the appearance of the Hunter Commission report. We also value it as giving employment to the unemployed poor in the interior of the country. But that with some men may be a subsidiary consideration. With the achievement of Swarajya

the political aspect of Khaddar is bound to disappear, the purely economic aspect alone will remain. Even under Swarajya hand spinning may have its uses. Some kinds of hand spun cloth is a luxury even for the rich. To the poor the spinning wheel will be an economic asset, and an aid to the preservation of self-respectful home labour and the happiness of the family life. But under Swarajya the mills would never be banned with a curse on their head, though they may have to be run with foreign machinery. A labour government, under Swarajya will conceivably pass acts of Legislature by which the general class of labourers may be secured in point of the minimum amount of legitimate wages, a reasonable share in the profits of the mill industry, and a reasonable standard of comfort during employment on duty. But it will not certainly carry on a propaganda against the mill industry, much less crush it by legislation.

Take a third instance. I do not see any use for the Congress itself after we get Swarajya according to the hypothesis. The whole business of the Congress will be shifted from the Congress pandal to the Council Chamber (as it has been even now to a certain extent) and very rightly too.

Under Swarajya there will be no necessity of organising National Schools, because the educational department under Swarajya will itself be Nationalised.

On the other hand the Hindu Moslem unity, the propaganda to remove untouchability and to put down liquor—these may very well remain even under Swarajya.

(3) This is an involved and rather a self-contradictory question. It affects to assume in the first part that there is nothing of Non-co operation in the constructive programme. Now if that be so, then there is no meaning in insisting upon it as helping the cause of Non-co-operation. But if, on the other hand, the constructive programme has really

got materially to do with Non co operation, then it would be unreasonable to expect that all parties in the country, including those who are opposed to the principle and practice of Non co operation, would join in working it. The constructive programme either is or is not Non co operation. In the first case opponents of Non-co-operation cannot work it, in the second case it would be wrong to insist upon all the items of it as an aid to the onward march of Non co-operation.

(4) I do think that Non co-operators can work the constructive programme more effectively by entering the Councils. If we must call Government satanic, it cannot of course become less satanic by our entering Councils. But we can do something there to counteract its satanic doings. Government without a direct check in the Council chamber is bound to be more mischievous than with a direct check provided in that quarter. It is obvious that agitation within the Council chamber is bound to prove in certain respects more fruitful than outside it. Education cannot be completely nationalised unless we get complete Swarajya. But I fail to see why a Nationalist may not succeed in the Council in securing for education greater freedom from official control or greater recognition for indigenuous efforts. I don't think Khaddar can be directly benefitted by our entry into the Councils, except by the premium put upon it by Legislators wearing it and making it current, if not fashionable, in the Council chamber. Thus, at any rate, can be asserted that there is nothing inconsistent between work in the Legislative Councils and the propaganda of the constructive programme. If a man be already inclined to favour any of the items of the constructive programme, he can express that favour with even greater effect in the council. His vote there may give greater power to



his elbow. There is nothing in the programme which a Councillor will be estopped from doing theoretically or practically. The men within the Council can by their obstruction certainly effect a paralysis of Government to the same limited extent as the present Non-co operators outside the Council can paralyse the trade in foreign cloth by preaching and wearing Khaddar. The same imagination that can conceive a complete boycott of foreign cloth can imagine an effective deadlock in the Council. And if government may be supposed to be able to stop the deadlock by rules, can they not stop the boycott movement also by repression or even legislation ?

#### SWADESHI

(1 to 18) Replies to these questions will be submitted by the Secretary of my Provincial Congress Committee. His statement will be based upon information already available at the head-office, as well as that supplied by the District Secretaries on my requisition, sent out since I received the questionnaire of the Enquiry Committee.

But I would offer a few general observations on the points involved in these questions. The Maharashtra is a non-cotton producing province with the exception of the two Khandesh districts. Nor does it produce any silk. It produces a little rough wool which is spun by goat herds into coarse thread, which again is woven into very rough kind of blankets. No other fabric is grown in this province from which cloth can be made. That accounts for the fact that the people of Maharashtra are but scantily acquainted with the art of spinning. They know however the art of weaving which is done with yarn imported into the province. The chief source of supply is Bombay. And the bulk of the yarn

used for fine cloth is foreign yarn. Accustomed for a long time to use foreign yarn for weaving, the weavers can be induced with only great difficulty to use hand spun yarn. A patriotic merchant, who has business influence over local weavers, is now and then able to induce them to give a trial to hand-spun yarn but even that, when a definite assurance is forthcoming that he would purchase whatever quality or quantity of cloth may thus be produced. Endeavour however is now being made to induce the weavers to substitute Indian mill yarn for foreign yarn. This may have the effect of weaning the weavers from foreign yarn and reinforced by a steadily growing demand for Swadeshi cloth in the larger sense, their next step may be to give a trial to hand-spun yarn, while in the meantime, the demand for Khaddar would grow and assure the weavers of a market for their product.

There is however another class of weavers who have taken up the occupation of weaving in this Non-co-operation movement, and these more readily go in for using hand-spun yarn for their looms. So that every yard of a fairly strong hand-spun yarn will get a chance in course of time to mount the loom. Care must however be taken by local organisers to keep the bad stuff spun by beginners from being mixed up with the better quality yarn.

The Congress organisations have helped in a general manner the spread of the Charkha and the increased activity of the hand loom. The help has taken the form of money in most cases, but the business is generally done by the spinners and weavers in their own shades, and the Congress bodies only wisely refrain from exercising any direct supervision or control over the business. It is very rarely that Congress bodies can command the services of spinning or weaving experts. The actual spinner or weaver however

has a fair acquaintance with his business, and should be trusted to do his best with such enthusiasm and practical knowledge as he possesses. Expert guidance he will always welcome wherever available.

The Khaddar is popular among those people who generally mix themselves in public movements of one kind or another. But it is not impossible to see Khaddar worn even outside this circle by respectable merchants or even Government servants in mufti. It is also worn by a large number of students in aided or even Government schools and colleges. The Khadi cap is not under a ban in semi Government offices.

The price of Khaddar is fairly high; it almost equals the price of the rough mull cloth usually worn by the middle class. In this matter the merchant class is more to blame than anybody else. For here, unlike the mill industry, it is not the actual producer who fixes a high price, but it is the merchant or the middleman who wants to profit by the Khadi boom. It is otherwise in the case of mill cloth. There the mill owner himself sets such a high price to start with, that the middleman merchant can hardly afford to add to it beyond the margin of a meagre profit. In some places private shops were started by the Congress organisations to sell Khadi, but the local merchants made a grievance of it as interference in their business.

The Khaddar consumption does not show a big upward curve. This may partly be due to the fact that purchases have already been made which may last for many months to come. I doubt very much if Khaddar could keep even the present pace, if Indian millowners will only take steps to put reliably Indian mill made cloth on the market. For in many cases Khaddar is accepted only because it is the safest to rely upon it for the moment to avoid foreign yarn.

All groups of N C O do not equally agree as to whether the Congress Swadeshi Boycott movement should necessarily be confined to Khaddar and may not be extended to honest Indian mill-cloth

There is a vigorous but not an aggressive propaganda in Maharashtra in relation to the boycott of foreign cloth. But the sad fate of many a merchant shop dealing in foreign cloth bears testimony to the silent advance of the boycott movement

Personally I do not see any connection between the wearing of Khaddar and civil disobedience. Khaddar can be popularised without Congressmen being coerced to its use. The spread of the Indian mill cloth in preference to foreign cloth undoubtedly got some additional encouragement from resolutions passed by the Congress and much could be achieved without coercion in this respect even in the matter of Khaddar

The details of the activity of my Provincial Congress Committee with regard to Swadeshi and Boycott are contained in the statement of the Secretary of the Committee already submitted to this body

#### CONGRESS MEMBERS

The figures of Congress membership will be found in the Secretary's statement. Of course the enrolment of last year was far greater because the enrolment of members was for a certain period the sole and special business of the Congress organisations. The Working Committee at its meeting at Bardoli has recommended re-registration of last year's members. But it was pointed out even at the time that this was an impracticable measure and in fact no registration has been made in my province. The small activity of District Committees this year is practically confined

## PANCHAYATS

The figures of N C O pleaders will be found in the secretary's statement. The number of such pleaders however has decreased this year as some of them have resumed practice. Generally speaking those N C O pleaders who are willing to take assistance from the Bajaj fund had not much practice before they declared their Non-co-operation in this respect. I know of no single instance in this province in which a pleader who once enjoyed a lucrative practice has adhered to the boycott of law-courts after twelve months.

Beyond one or two there are no Panchayats in working order in this province. The Panchayat Courts as a rule are not popular because generally the defendants do not submit to arbitration and even if an arbitration decree is passed in most cases resort to a Government law-court at least for its registration and execution proceedings, cannot be avoided. The private Panchayat Court therefore is in effect only a device though a good device indeed for saving court fees expenditure. But as resort to an official law-court becomes necessary at least in the final stage of the award litigants are not prepared to take the necessary risk to their interest by definitely boycotting law-courts or indefinitely delaying recourse to them. Apart from regularly instituted Panchayat Courts however there is a slightly growing tendency to resort to private arbitration as the Civil Procedure Code provides for award registration. If my information is correct the business in law-courts has appreciably increased instead of decreasing notwithstanding a fairly strong agitation in the province against law-courts and a particularly offensive propaganda against pleaders. It is generally felt that great injustice is done by the Congress in laying the axe at the root of the legal profession alone.

whereas doctors and engineers holding foreign degrees or official university degrees putting a premium on western civilisation and acting as agents for foreign druggists and chemists and manufacturers can carry on their business and earn money and yet claim to be good N C O s The prestige of the British Government it is contended is as much involved in the business of these other professions as in that of the pleaders

The pleader class on the other hand may be amenable to a definite sacrifice imposed on them along with others pro rata on the principle of the Income Tax levy and it is possible that out of this fund the Congress work generally and even the establishment of Panchayat Courts may be financed

#### UNTOUCHABILITY

Untouchability is fairly on its way to decrease It will of course take a long time before it completely disappears but the ground gained by it is more easily gained and more easily consolidated than that by either any of the boycotts or Hindu Moslem unity The Congress agitation in this matter has given timely aid to the anti Untouchability sentiment which was already growing strong in Maharashtra

About the drink campaign I must say the agitation in this respect in this province was conducted this year with unprecedented vigour but it must also be stated that never was there greater cause for despair about the success of an anti drink campaign so long as the electorate does not declare its voice unmistakably in the councils In the Thana district the threat of civil disobedience had a temporary effect on the officials In Poona over five hundred people broke the law that is to say they picketted liquor-shops in spite of magisterial orders of prohibition and were actually

may take some time before it crosses the ridge and begins to decline. Here again the bulk of the Non-Brahmin agitators have yet to be disillusioned in respect of their faith in British Government. But the working of the new reforms is happily accomplishing that purpose steadily. Apart from the question whether some of the grievances of Non-Brahmins have a rational basis the Brahmins have generally realised that times have changed, and that they must be prepared to forego their special rights and privileges and render service to the nation on a basis of communal equality and in a truly democratic spirit. It is doubtful whether the Non Brahmins will be benefitted in the long run by entering the services and giving up their old professional traditions. But advice of that kind is bound to be misunderstood in its spirit and the Brahmins now realise that in the coming topsy turvy-dom of communal careers, will be found the immediate process of an all round levelling which alone will help the cause of an early realisation of a democratic Swarajya.

As regards Mahomedans, it should frankly be stated that the Hindus are not satisfied that the Mahomedans are doing as much as they should by way of reciprocating the brotherly feeling which the Hindus entertain. They feel, for one thing, that the Khulafat agitation is slightly overtainted with the spirit of Pan Islamism, and secondly, that the condemnation by Mahomedans of the forced conversions of Hindus in Malabar was not as full throated and did not ring as true as it should be in these days of Hindu Moslem unity. A formula of adjustment has yet to be found by which local Hindu-Moslem disputes about cow killing and the Mosque music can be locally settled without the intervention of peace makers of first magnitude. I wish the Enquiry Committee seriously tries to tackle the problem.

## NON-VIOLENCE.

The persistent teaching of non violence has been properly understood and even appreciated in the province. It must be admitted that Maharashtra never before had implicit faith in non-violence, but it can also claim that violence too was never taught in this province as a cult. The Maharashtra has always recognised that studious non violence alone can make society safe for democracy, but it could never extol the merits of non violence to the point of condemning the exercise of even the right of self defence, or private defence. On the other hand though the teaching of non-violence as a principle of political conduct has no doubt increased during the last twelve months, I cannot say that even that teaching itself is free from some of those passions which Mahatma Gandhi condemns as derogatory to the real spirit of non-violence.

## CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE.

I do not think that my province is ready to start aggressive Mass Civil Disobedience. But the spirit of defensive and individual civil disobedience is abroad. It is difficult to mention that one particular law will be more acceptable than another for practising disobedience. But almost inexhaustible opportunities for a campaign of civil disobedience might be found in the restrictions which may be from time to time, put upon the freedom of speech, action, and association by the bureaucracy whenever any agitation may reach an acute stage. Unfortunately even in this matter the initiative rests with government.

Even if a province takes isolated action in regard to civil disobedience, I do not think that any bad consequences will necessarily follow. For, provincial action is, in my opinion, as natural a condition of life in political agitation as provincial autonomy in the domain of political reform. In fact I



despair of the whole of India rising to a common high pitch of resentment simultaneously, even when a protest has to be made against an admittedly all India injustice. From a practical point of view a local provincial grievance alone may take the popular resentment to the required pitch unless Government come to the assistance of the people by unjust ordinances simultaneously applicable to the whole of India. It is possible on the other hand that if one province starts a vigorous agitation of civil disobedience it may not altogether fail to receive a resonant response of sympathy from other provinces. And while on this point I would like to say that the vow of silence sought to be imposed by Mahatma Gandhi upon the rest of the provinces on the eve of the Bardoli campaign of civil disobedience, was in excess of the needs of the case the golden mean I would think lies somehow between completely silencing other provinces for giving the widest field of action of civil disobedience for one isolated province on the one hand, and waiting for the signal to be given for a campaign of civil disobedience till all the provinces in India are brought into a line of readiness for action of a uniform character.

### REPRESSION

Repression was not practised in this province to that extent to which it was practised in some other provinces, for example the Punjab, the U P and Bengal. And as terrorism comes on the scene when repression assumes an accentuated form it follows that terrorism also was not practised in this province beyond the usual limit.

I do not think that the treatment of gaol prisoners in this province is in any way better than in other provinces.

Such repression as was actually practised had however, no reactionary effect upon either masses or the workers, or

the spirit of non violence. The province is, on the whole, getting more and more ready for measures of vigorous agitation.

### GENERAL SITUATION

The movement of N C O has undoubtedly served to infuse into the country an accentuated spirit of Nationalism in general, though doubts are being far from removed from the popular mind as to what the term of N C O really means, and whether the detailed programme enumerated under its title, is in full harmony with the spirit of resistance which the new movement has internally aroused. It is no doubt generally recognised that with the acceptance of the N C O. movement we have just entered the avenue of the *means* of obtaining political freedom and commenced an exploration of the *innumerable long winding paths and short-cuts* that meet the eye therein whereas in the old days we in the Congress were, till at least the Amritsar Congress, concerning ourselves more or less with the formulation of political *demands* or fixing in our minds the *ends* of political agitation. It is also recognised that the intense personal teaching of self sacrifice by Mahatma Gandhi, which has ushered in the N C O movement, has done quite a lot of good to the country. But it is also felt that the sacrifice permanently imposed upon even an average Non-co operator is too intensive to be a practical proposition, and unfortunately if also rightly, the movement is judged not by the success in this respect which Mahatmaji has in his own person attained but by the failure of which the loudest and the best of his adherents may be condemned on reliable evidence.

Moreover, the policy of N C O could have received greater appreciation and acceptance in conduct if it was distinctly understood to remain in operation for a limited time and for

a limited purpose. The longer will the movement be prolonged without suitable amendment, the larger will be the target for the arrows of opponents on the grounds of its failure. One sad immediate effect of the movement has been to seriously unsettle the established ranks of public workers and to add to the mental hiatuses which already existed.

Far from repression adversely affecting Non-co-operation, it has helped the movement immensely. In fact had it not been for repression the public gaze would have been concentrated on the results of the constructive part of the N C O. programme, and they would have proved very meagre by themselves. But for repression the N C O movement would hardly have come into any vital contact with Government. Every other part of the movement, Government have tried to kill with kindness. They have dealt lightly with Non-co-operating pleaders. They have freely welcomed back Non-co-operating students. They supplied Charkhas to police-families. And openly supported the Khaddar on its merits. They could not help the boycott of Councils but they made no secret of their opinion that the Councils proved considerably weak owing to the absence of the old Nationalist element from them. But the boycott of the Prince's visit proved a potent file for official hypocrisy, and a campaign of extensive repression was undertaken which helped the movement of N C O. On the other hand, if the Congress had failed to keep up the counterpart of repression that is to say civil disobedience always before the public eye the constructive programme by itself would not have been able to keep N C O buoyed up.

The Bardoli Delhi resolutions certainly put back the hands of the N C O movement. No one can say what the people expected would really come out of the Bardoli experiment. But they took the Bardoli resolutions as the inauguration of a

change of policy. They were not themselves responsible for the speed of the movement before Bardoli, but all the same they could not help feeling a sort of jerk by the Bardoli resolutions though no doubt the great man responsible for the speed must have wisely decided to check it. The Delhi resolutions could not completely undo what the Bardoli resolutions did. I do not mean to say that the public have availed themselves of the latitude for civil disobedience, contained even in the Delhi resolutions to the uttermost degree possible but the Bardoli Delhi resolutions taken together undoubtedly made a cut in the spirit of the N C O movement.

I do think and I am not saying it for the first time, that some very material changes are required in order to make the programme of N C O practicable to suit it to a much larger mass of population than at present and to speed on the movement in its larger spirit. A few of my definite suggestions would be somewhat as follows —

(1) The name of the movement should be changed from mere N C O to Responsive N C O. Unqualified N C O. all along the line and in its utmost literal sense is almost impossible unless the people were in a state of rebellion. As it is the people are being asked to stick to the name of N C O without the possibility of complete conformity with its tenets being either induced or enforced. For the more aggressive and visible forms of N C O people have been found to be dependent upon Government initiative. They have given the response all right to all provocative measures of Government but they have not shown very encouraging results in matters in which the initiative rested with themselves. To make my meaning clear I would say that the gaol programme of N C O has been more successful than the boycott programme—the boycott whether of titles, schools, courts or foreign cloth. These being the conditions of political life, the word responsive

N C O would give an adequate and a suitable expression to those conditions as well as to the possibilities of our making anything out of them

(2) There should be an authoritative definition of N C O. At present N C O is sought to be defined only by dogmatic enumeration. My own definition of Responsive Non-co-operation would be "A movement whose object is to offer a continuous and an all round resistance to Government, arising out of withdrawal of co-operation wherever possible, by every man according to the means and opportunity available to him, till Swarajya is obtained—Swarajya, that is to say, in such form and stages as may be determined by the Indian National Congress from time to time."

(3) Non co-operation may be expressed to begin at one end with such a simple thing as the giving up of titles and end with non payment of taxes at the other end. But the Congress should not take it upon itself to prescribe a uniform course of conduct for all Congressmen. Each province should be left free to choose particular methods of Responsive N C O suitable to itself. It should be possible to name some things, positive or negative, which may be recognised as the minimum observance of Responsive N C O. Thus, I for one, would call that man a Non co-operator—who has done or is doing any of the following things (1) gives up a title, or (2) resigns Government service for public work, or (3) is known to be a staunch active supporter of the Swadeshi, or (4) goes to jail as a passive resister, or (5) refuses to recognise the authority of any constituted agent of Government, or (6) suffers in any recognisable manner for the sake of vindicating the rights of the people against Government, or (7) puts up a plucky fight against Government in constituted bodies so as to prove an embarrassment to them, or (8) gives a munificent donation to a popular or political movement of a distinctly nationalist

or anti Government tendency, (9) or sets up any organisation to spread the boycott of foreign goods and so on and so on. The distinction should be obvious. In the present programme of N C O the obligation based on observances is constructive and simultaneous. According to my view it will be several and detached or separate in point of time. Even before the advent of the present N C O people never made any mistake about distinguishing between the real friends and the real opponents of Government. The N C O movement no doubt made an attempt to drive the wedge deeper but failed in the attempt. It only splintered the wedge itself by submitting it to extraordinary vertical as well lateral pressure under some extremely pointed Donts. The prohibitions were found impracticable and N C O became a laughing stock not because there is anything inherently undesirable in those Donts but because people cannot yet nor ever will take a spiritual enough view of life to carry them out with complete faithfulness in practice for an indefinite period.

(4) The present volunteers pledge should be modified and the enrolment of volunteers should be more unfettered.

(5) The boycott of schools colleges law-courts and councils should not be made a *sine qua non* of R N C O. The constructive side of these boycotts alone should be accentuated.

MR. N. C. KELKAR BEFORE THE C D E  
COMMITTEE \**Evidence of Mr N C Kelkar, Member of the A I. C C and  
of the Working Committee*

PANDIT MOTILAL NEHRU TO MR N C. KELKAR.

Q.—It seems to me—I have just been able to glance through your statement—that you would suggest a radical change in the programme of Non co-operation beginning with change of the name itself?

A.—Name and definition and also the conditions

Q.—Don't you think it will entirely change not only the face of the movement but also the heart of it?

A.—In my opinion the heart will not be touched, it will be strengthened

Q.—Is not the movement based on the self-suffering and renunciation which it inculcates, and is it not these two things that have appealed to the imagination of the public?

A.—But I do not take one jot away from the suffering and renunciation. Only I want it to be put very generally without mentioning particular classes. My idea is that it should be left entirely to a man in which particular manner he will take the appeal and in order that as many as possible may be brought in under this head of suffering, I would rather make the programme comprehensive. I have put it (by way of five suggestions,) in the last para on pages 108-110 (Please refer to the written statement above) I want to make it comprehensive so that as many as possible could be brought under one class, giving

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\*Poona, 20th. July, 1922.

different opportunities to different people according to the conditions without making them simultaneous

An opportunity may come to a man at any time

Q—But as the programme stands it does not apply to all men simultaneously ?

A—My point is that by enumerating a few classes you have made them odious in the public eye I want a general description to be enunciated in the name of self-sacrifice and renunciation for all people That will give you what I mean exactly If you enumerate enumerate all classes of people Every man must be given an opportunity of suffering and self-sacrificing but only particular people should not be asked to make self sacrifice as in the case of the lawyers

Q—Was not the governing principle of the resolution passed by the Session at Calcutta that we have to get at these departments of Government upon which its prestige and power are built and upon that principle certain departments were selected for non-co-operation ?

A—But I object to this selection

Q—For instance can you give any other departments ?

A—Take the Telegraphs take the Post Office

Q—Do not these departments that you have named Telegraphs and Posts belong to an advanced stage of Non-co-operation ?

A—I want you to touch all the departments simultaneously and march onward Do not put the dais on vertically but go on putting it horizontally upwards.

Q—What will be the discrimination if you simply allow each man to do what he thinks in the best interests of the



A.—I think I have put that in one sentence here in my statement:—"Even before the advent of the present Non-co-operation, people never made any mistake in distinguishing between the real friends and the real opponents of Government." I say the present enumeration has been useless. You can find people masquerading as Non-co-operators who are not doing anything. How would you eliminate them from the movement?

Q.—Each item of Non-co-operation stands for a principle; does it not?

A.—If you will define Non-co-operation, I am quite sure I can gain my object. I want you to define Non-co-operation and allow each to carry out Non-co-operation as much as he can. At present Non-co-operation tries to fix the maximum sacrifice on people, but the right policy is to fix a minimum.

Q.—Although there is no hard and fast definition of Non-co-operation, don't you think there can really be no mistake, having regard to the various items, as to who is and who is not a Non-co-operator?

A.—The mistake does not after all lie so much in things enumerated as in things left out.

Q.—A Non-co-operator under existing conditions is a man who acts upon such items of the Non-co-operation programme as apply to him. In the case of a lawyer who is a Councillor and title-holder, he must give up everything, his practice included, and he must also boycott Government and aided educational institutions for his children. The definition of a Non-co-operator is to be deduced from the attitude of a person towards the items in the present Non-co-operation programme which apply to him. You would change it so that a

Non-co-operator is a person who complies with any one or more of the items. Is that so?

A.—That is enough. My objection is that these alone are not the details which should be included.

Q.—What I meant is that the definition is clear enough.

A.—To a certain extent as far as those particulars go.

Q.—You can definitely say who is and who is not a Non-co-operator?

A.—You can see whether a man has carried out these particular items or not.

Q.—You are aware of the fact that this N. C. O. programme is not an exhaustive programme?

A.—That is the fault.

Q.—Is it not a fact that you cannot be a complete Non-co-operator with the Government even if you give up every connection with the Government by the mere fact of having to buy even a pie worth of things in the bazaar?

A.—Yes, absolute Non-co-operation is impossible.

Q.—And therefore without going to that extreme of rebellion, it is necessary to have a limited programme.

A.—Not in the manner you have done. There were two courses open, either not to mention any details or enumerate all possible details.

Q.—It is necessary to have a limited programme. You think that the way in which the programme has been limited at present is not desirable?

A.—Yes.

Q.—And that your purpose can be served by putting a limitation?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Let us finish with the programme as it stands. Then the only fault you have to find with the present pro-

gramme is that it has not succeeded in practice ?

A —Yes The fault lies in the enumeration I have referred to I myself recommend its withdrawal, but even then there may be failures such as you have got at present.

Q —So that by altering these items as you suggest you do not guarantee success and you do not safeguard against failure even after those changes are adopted ?

A —Success can be achieved only in a number of years, not within a definite period, perhaps it may take a long time.

Q —Don't you think that we have achieved just that measure of success in the various items of the Calcutta programme which is proportionate to the effort which we put forth ?

A —The success you have achieved is due to the general enunciation and definition of scheme but your failure is due to the details as enumerated by you

Q —Is not our failure in proportion to the lack of effort in the particular direction in which we planned our programme ?

A —No

Q —You say the success we have achieved in the various items has nothing to do with the effort brought to bear on these general items ?

A —My point is that you could have avoided the failures if certain details had not been enumerated as you did.

Q —That is to say we undertook too much ?

A —Yes

Q —According to you a person who is a title-holder, a Government servant, a member of Council, who helps the Government generally but also gives a donation to the Tilak Swaraj Fund can be called a Non-co-operator ?

A.—If the donation is munificent I would have him, but such is a rarity.

cient. And what I want the Congress to do is to devote itself to investigating the means, but in doing so it must not make invidious distinctions.

Q.—It appears that you would not object to going into the Councils ?

A.—No.

Q.—That is to say, under existing conditions ?

A.—Even under existing conditions

Q.—And after going into the Councils you will follow the policy of Responsive Co-operation ?

A.—Responsive Non-co-operation, and I have said Non-co-operation wherever possible

Q.—And co-operation ?

A.—I am not speaking of co operation at all. I am not a co-operator.

Q.—Suppose a beneficial measure is before the Council ?

A.—I may or may not vote for it.

Q.—Do you wish to go into the Council to co-operate or non-co-operate ?

A.—To non-co-operate in the sense of resisting wherever possible. If it is a beneficial measure I may not oppose it.

Q.—But it is Responsive Co-operation ?

A.—No

Q.—Do you expect a majority of Non-co-operators to enter the Councils at the next election if the Congress allows N. C. O s to enter the Councils ?

A.—A large number of Non-co-operators can get into the Councils.

Q.—Do you expect your electorate will return a fairly larger majority of N. C. O s to the Councils ?

A.—I am quite sure.

Q.—For the present if the Congress recedes from that position and says : We leave it to you to enter the Councils or

not. As things stand at present, do you think the majority of the electorate will send any Non-co-operators to the Councils?

A.—I think so. (7)

Q.—Will there be a majority of N. C. O.s in the Councils?

A.—I cannot give any assurance as to a majority, but the men who can be relied upon will enter.

Q.—Suppose there is no majority in the Councils?

A.—There can be resistance given by a minority.

Q.—How can there be effective resistance?

A.—Though not in the beginning, Government will feel it both inside and outside by and by.

Q.—Any way it won't advance the position more than if we had gone into the Council from the beginning?

A.—Practically it means we go back to the old times and see what we can do.

Q.—Up to Calcutta I was of the same opinion as you now hold!

A.—Up to Calcutta we were on one side, but after that you changed your view, but I did not change mine.

Q.—Now you are aware of the fact that the fatwa of the Ulemas stands in the way of Mahomedans going into the Councils, and those who obey that fatwa cannot, according to their religious convictions, go and offer themselves as candidates for the Councils. If all the Mahomedan Congressmen keep out of the Councils, then you will admit it is impossible to have a majority especially in Northern India, Punjab and Bengal?

A.—It may be so. I will take it from you.

Answer to a question.—If all the N. C. O. Mahomedans stick to the injunctions of the fatwa, then of course the attitude of our Mahomedan brethren would be obstructive to us.

Q.—Would you advise the Congress to undertake any measure which might take away the Mahomedans from the Congress?

A.—I would advise the Mahomedans not to introduce religious matters in the Congress which is a national body composed of people of different religions.

Q.—But they are bound to obey the fatwa of the Ulemas and abstain from the Councils. The question is whether it is not in the interest of the Congress that your Mahomedan friends should be with you. Do you therefore still advise the Congress to allow the N. C. O.s to go into the Councils and take the risk of the Mahomedans leaving in a body?

A.—I will try my best to get my Mahomedan brethren to change their attitude. If they still wish to mix up religious questions with politics, well, I would go and fall at their feet and beg them not to introduce religious matters in the Congress. I would remind them that there was a time when the Mahomedans in the Congress were also members of the Councils.

Q.—You know that there was considerable weighty opinion in the Congress which was opposed to going into the Councils, and they were not actuated by any religious reasons—the Hindus?

A.—No.

Q.—And their Mahomedan friends discovered that it was not merely a political but also a religious matter, and having discovered that, they came and said to us:—"Yes, we will go with you." Would it now be fair on your part and on the part of the Congress to say to them: "We leave you to your own resources" and so on?

A.—The question is too premature to be put to me, but I have said what I shall do with regard to the religious

susceptibilities of our Mahomedan friends.

Q.—Along with this inquiry the Khilafat Committee is also conducting an inquiry, and they are also taking evidence on the same lines. Now that evidence has all been against the Councils.

A.—I repeat it is rather premature for you to put me this question at this moment. I can only repeat what I have already said on this point.

Q.—But for our own benefit for the good of the Congress itself, for the success of our own movement is it not essential that your Mahomedan friends should all along be enthusiastically with you?

A.—You know our Shankaracharyas have often regulated their decisions so as to meet the wishes of the people. I am sure our Mahomedan Ulemas could similarly be induced to fall in with the wishes of those who respect and obey their fatwas. If we succeed in winning the Mahomedans over to our view our unity in the Congress would not be endangered.

Q.—Supposing the Mahomedans keep away from the Councils do you expect that by the Hindus alone going into the Councils you can accomplish anything except embittering relations between the Hindus and Mussulmans?

A.—I do not think the Mussulmans would accuse the Hindus of a breach of faith with them. If I were a Mahomedan I would say to the Hindus, My religion prevents me. You are doing what your religion does not prevent you from doing.

Q.—Is it possible that we can attain Swaraj without the co-operation of Mahomedans?

A.—Of course not. But that co-operation they will give in their own way even from outside the Councils.

Q.—Are not the Mahomedan members of the Congress at present going the whole hog?

A.—They are.

Q.—Have not the Mahomedans, so far as the Congress is concerned, thrown in their lot completely with the Congress?

A.—I damit it. But the true touchstone has not been applied yet.

RAJAGOPALACHARIAR TO N. C. KELKAR.

Q.—I first draw your attention to the statement in the last column on page 6 of your written statement: "A Non-co-operator became a laughing-stock and etc." May I ask you whether you wish that that final statement apart from the reasons should be there? Would you like that statement to remain in your name?

A.—All right. I will change the wording something as follows: "has helped to discredit the movement."

Q.—With reference to the last question about the fatwa, do you think that religio-political pressure of that sort will not tend to impair Hindu-Moslem unity, and therefore you would entreat them to avoid this as far as possible?

A.—I would say to them: For God's sake do not mix up politics with religion. I will fall at their feet for the sake of my country, take the dust of their feet and put it on my head and entreat them not to mix their religion with Indian politics.

Q.—That is to say, we must make a compromise and not endanger our unity?

A.—Yes.

Q.—In your written statement you have put together the Law Courts, Schools and Councils. In the case of



the Councils I understand that you would ask for total removal of the boycott from the programme and for a definite positive resolution allowing entry into the Councils ?

A —I would ask the Congress to pass a resolution clearly giving permission to N C O s to enter the Councils.

Q —About the boycott of Schools ?

A —I don t like the present position I would ask the Congress to forget that part of the programme also

Q —You would therefore recommend a comprehensive resolution omitting boycott of Schools ?

A —Yes

Q —And with reference to the Law Courts do you recommend a clearly defined permissive resolution ?

A —Yes as in the case of the Schools.

Q —In the case of the Courts what is your own view ?

A —Omit all reference to the boycott of Courts and leave the people to do what they like

Q —It appears to me that you have reduced the whole matter to a mere question of definition and your sole object in all the things that you have proposed is so to define Non-co-operators as to include a larger number of opponents of Government in the old orthodox party, real opponents than the present definition of Non-co-operators does ?

A —Yes

Q —And in order to attain that end you don t mind details ?

A —I do not understand you

Q —And you therefore think that the clear definition of Non-co-operators should only be to distinguish between the real friends and real opponents of Government ?

A —Yes The rest to me is unsubstantial

Q —You think the real difficulty is this that there is a large

body of real opponents of Government who have been deprived of their platform or have been compelled to be lukewarm supporters of the N. C. O. movement who are considered as clogs in the machine. Am I correct ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Your solution is to so re-define Non-co-operators as to include these people ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—You think that entry into the Councils is the substantial question in the triple boycott ?

A.—I think so frankly, but as a matter of self-respect for the Congress I would advise the removal of the boycott of Courts and Schools sooner than the boycott of Councils. For the present, I have been finding that any talk of a change in the Congress resolution is tabooed.

Q.—What would you do with a majority of your own in the Councils ?

A.—If I have a majority I shall at once proceed for a deadlock which may end either in the alteration of the Reforms Act or something else.

Q.—But if we have a minority you would still remain ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—If in a minority, what would you do in the Councils ?

A.—Oppose bad measures and support good measures.

Q.—But that amounts to Responsive Co-operation ?

A.—But do you want me to obstruct any measures, good or bad ? what would you ask me to do ? If I can create a deadlock in the larger interests of the country by sacrificing a minor or immediate benefit, I would do so.

Q.—Do you recommend our going into the Councils mainly because we can do immediate good to the country or mainly because we can take up immediately the ques-

tion of deadlock by a majority ?

A —With a view to create a deadlock That is my chief object

Q —You think that in the case of a large number of the transferred subjects we can exercise entire power if we go into the Councils ?

A —Yes at least there will be a very fine opportunity of creating deadlocks

Q —And you think that in places like Madras and Bombay for instance on account of the communal differences a majority will be doubtful but you are sure of other provinces ?

A —I don't know of other provinces But in my province the differences are much less keen and the Non Brahmins are now gradually coming round to our side and I have reason to expect their support in the Councils

Q —Do you think or not that between the Brahmins and Non Brahmins abstention from the Councils by N C Os has created a better atmosphere so far as the Non Brahmins are concerned or worse ?

A —The situation has not become in any way better from that point of view They do not give us credit for remaining outside the Councils and thus making entry easier for them

Q —If you contest the elections the relations would become worse or better ?

A —No they will have no effect one way or the other Any incidents in connection with the elections would soon be forgotten

Q —Our open attitude of obstruction will it not make the situation worse ?

A —I don't think so

Q —We cannot hope really for any kind of moral influence with the executive half of the Government by going into the Councils and working there ?

A —I don't hope at all. What we shall get will be got by our numerical strength in the Councils or by the power of agitation in and out.

Q —I wish to know whether you agree with me that apart from the vetoes etc. provided in the Government of India Act there is a far more important thing in the Services whereby they have made the Services independent of the Legislature. And really in the transferred subjects the Services being common Ministers can exercise little control. This reduces the power of the Legislature to a great extent even in respect of the transferred departments, does it not ?

A —The presence of a determined body of people in the councils is a solvent for all the eccentricities of the Act. I also know that in view of the Reforms to be given Government have strengthened their hands on the services.

(Mr. Patel interrupting —The Indian Member in charge of Jails is afraid of doing what he wants because the Superintendent of a jail holds a different view.)

Q.—The Services, you are aware, are still carrying on a determined fight.

A —Yes. You will agree that the Councils by themselves will be an additional fighting ground, but if we find that the Councils take away the strenuousness of the fight outside, I would be the last man to go to the Councils.

KASTURIRANGA IYENGAR TO N C KELKAR.

Q —Before Non-co-operation was started the policy of the Congress was what is called Responsive Co-operation ?

A.—Yes

Q.—How long was it tried ?

A.—It did not get a trial at all. It was first enunciated at Amritsar soon after the Reforms. If I remember the words of Mr C. R. Das and Mr. Tilak aright, they said —“ Still go into the Councils and resist ”

Q.—And because the Congress considered that that policy had failed that the policy of Non-co-operation was started ?

A.—Yes. But the policy advocated at Amritsar did not receive any trial at all, and Non-co-operation has received a trial for at least 18 months. There is reason for wishing to give such a trial to the Amritsar policy, because whereas in the old days of the Congress there was no elected majority in the Council now we have got it.

Q.—But was not the policy of Non-co-operation based on the ground that Government had failed to meet the demands of the people in regard to such matters as the Punjab wrongs, Khilafat etc ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—And as far as you can see, has not this policy borne good fruit even in the limited time in which it has been in operation ?

A.—Every new movement bears fruit in a geometrical progression, because it gains the momentum of all the previous movements.

Q.—Has not this movement awakened political self-consciousness in the people more than any other movement in the past ?

A.—No one denies that. But it is not due to the particular items of the N C O programme, but to the personality of Mahatma Gandhi. I will maintain that the move-

ment has become a laughing-stock with regard to the boycott of Courts and Schools

Q.—You are a great admirer of the late Lokamanya Tilak ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Has he not advocated boycott of Courts and Schools and of all Government institutions in his speeches ?

A.—No Throughout his life he fought his cases in the Law Courts because he must have found in practice that he could not do otherwise

Q.—Even as regards these two items, boycott of Law Courts and Schools have they not given some good results ? They have given us a number of workers ?

A.—It was a trumpery and temporary affair I attach no importance to it The importance of keeping it in the resolution is outweighed by the decided harm done by its retention Why do you not lay the same ban on doctors, engineers and many other classes ? What has happened is this Simply owing to the accident of some people being pleaders they have become a laughing-stock So instead of good will developing we are drawing public attention to each other's supposed shortcomings

Q.—The present attitude of the Government after Mahatma's imprisonment instead of becoming better has changed for the worse ?

A.—Yes

Q.—There is a general impression both among the people and in the Government that the movement has weakened generally since the imprisonment of Mahatma ?

A.—Yes What you say is correct so far as it goes But it is not decisive in any way Are we simply to shape our policies only taking Government acts as an index of what is undesirable for us ? The attitude of Govern-

ment cannot be an unfailing guide to us even if it be generally wise to judge by contraries. For example Government have supplied charkhas to police families. Shall we therefore give up the charkha? We should always retain the right to judge for ourselves apart from the professions Government may make.

Q —Is not the impression well founded that when the Councils were boycotted, the step was treated as withdrawal of popular support from the Government?

A —Entry into the Councils is not treated by the Government as support of the Government. That is my opinion.

Q —You know that under the existing Council regulations all persons who have been convicted and sentenced to imprisonment for six months or over are disqualified from entering the Councils and that has excluded and will exclude a large number of our political workers from the list of possible candidates and under the circumstances you still advise that the others should enter the Councils?

A —But I do not think Government will dare to refuse to remove this disqualification if ex political prisoner-leaders stand for the Councils. Government would be forced to withdraw that disqualification.

Q —So you think that owing to the present depression in the country entry into the Councils will be useful?

A —You are now only taking away from the people one more opportunity for putting up a fight. It must be remembered that fight in the Councils adds so much to the political life in the country.

Q —You will suggest nothing better than this in order to improve the existing situation?

A —Certainly for I am entirely in favour of the Constructive Programme and the Civil Disobedience movement but

at the same time I am endeavouring to secure entry into the Councils.

Q—Are you in favour of Civil Disobedience?

A—If it is feasible, it is entirely desirable, and one province need not wait for another province. When one province starts, other provinces are sure to catch the contagion, and then combined individual resistance is put up by the people.

Q—When the whole bulk of Hindu opinion is in favour of the movement, what would the Mahomedans do?

A—I am sure Mahomedans will come round to our view.

CROSS EXAMINATION OF MR KELKAR BY MR PATEL

Q—A witness in Bombay told us that our movement has created a slave mentality in many people in this country, do you agree with this view?

A—I do not agree. I think it is a very good attitude of mind to be loyal to Mahatma Gandhi if one can conscientiously do so.

Q—You advocate entry into the Councils. Of course you are aware of the corrupting influences in the Council Chamber?

A—No. I was not in the Councils, myself, but you were and must know better. The bad type may have been so corrupted but not our best people. If you speak of corrupting influences, then such influences are to be met with everywhere in the world and cannot be avoided.

Q—You cannot compare, as regards effect, the patronage which Congress organisations can bestow, with that which Government can?



A —Even Congress organisations can offer patronage which however small is quite as bad in principle for small people as Government patronage for big people

Q —Now education is a transferred subject and it is for the last two years that the Reformed Councils have been at work Will you let me know what advance has been made in the matter of education in two years?

A —I do not know If an advance has been made it has been so small that I take no cognisance of it. I cannot say exactly how much as I have not been in direct touch with it

Q —I am told many schools have been closed in this province?

A —Yes

Q —And one High School in Poona?

A —But I think it is a good thing that it was closed as it was a Government School

Q —I repeat education has been a transferred subject for two years Will you let me know why the Minister, Dr Paranjpye has not succeeded in advancing education in this presidency?

A —He could not because of your boycott of the Councils I think if Mr Patel had been there, Dr Paranjpye would have been driven headlong into carrying out Mr Patel's suggestions

Q —I want to know whether any progress has been made in the prohibition of liquor in the presidency owing to the Reformed Councils

A —No progress but I know that the Congress anti-drink movement has materially reduced the excise income of Government

Answer to a question Yes, but if I had some of our N. C. O. people inside the Council the work within would have

been even better than what it has been outside.

Q.—I take it that because of the absence of the Nationalists in the Councils no progress has been made in the transferred subjects?

A.—Yes.

Q.—You say that the working of the Reforms by the Moderates has done no good in respect of the transferred subjects?

A.—Very little.

Q.—Mr Kelkar, is the statement that you have submitted to be considered a statement of your Provincial Congress Committee?

A.—No. I have not said that in my statement

Q Is it your personal opinion?

A.—I offer myself as a personal witness. However, I also hold another capacity and may supply any official information—if you want any.

Q.—Your Provincial Congress Committee has, beyond the facts and figures collected, no suggestions to make?

A.—This question was not put before the committee. The question of citing witnesses only was considered in a Congress Committee meeting.

Q.—There is the statement of the Congress Committee. But the changes that you indicate in your statement were not discussed in a meeting of your executive or of the general body?

A.—No.

Q.—I take it that Mr. Mahajan agrees with your statements?

A.—I believe, in a general way I cannot say definitely. You may ask him

Mr. Mahajan. I have clearly stated it in my statement.

Q.—Have you given a separate statement, and a different statement?

A.—(Mr. Kelker—He supplies the official information I may be asked about official information. But as a secretary, you may put the question to him).

Q.—Is your statement verified?

A.—He has signed it

Q.—Then I want to know whether the changes you propose would be endorsed by a general body of the Provincial Congress Committee?

A.—I have no idea of it. There may be difference of opinion and I do not know what the decision will be. Perhaps the decision may even go against me to a certain extent. I am not quite sure. Whatever may be the result.

Q.—You had no time to consult the Provincial Congress Committee?

A.—There was hardly any call in the opinion of the Congress Committee to put a consolidated statement.

Q.—I want to know whether the electors—not the council electors but the Congress electors—in your province would be in favour of entry into the councils or retaining the boycott.

A.—I cannot give an answer—a definite reply—to that. I may state that some time ago I had offered my own resignation as President of the Congress Committee and it was not accepted and I have reason to believe that at that time they were not ignorant of my opinions.

Q.—That was only recently?

A.—Yes a month ago.

Q.—I want to know your definite opinion as to whether we shall be able to achieve Swaraj and have our Punjab and Khilafat wrongs redressed by the Non-co-operation movement.

A—Not by itself alone. If we increase the scope of it, if we increase the field of the followers of Non co-operation by making it more comprehensive and put on the fight as in the old days, making the party as large as possible—the Congress as only one party—against moderates there is some chance

Q—A better chance?

A—Yes

Q—You would ask the Congress to eliminate Civil Disobedience?

A—Certainly not

Q—Then Mass Civil Disobedience necessarily?

A—Individual Civil Disobedience is perfectly alright

Q—Do you think that without a general strike Swaraj is possible?

A—Well a general strike may be useful under particular conditions and the last declaration of Non co-operation itself to my mind was in the nature more or less of a strike than a permanent movement. I always thought that at the back of Mahatma Gandhi's mind there was an advertence to the possibility of a settlement with the Government. That I thought was not an indication of the movement going on indefinitely. He was always looking for a settlement which did not come.

Q—Whatever the intensity with which the Non-co operation movement is worked the idea is to have a settlement with the Government and get Swaraj, it is so stated in the resolution itself. Definite things are told.

A—Swaraj is mentioned there but Mahatma Gandhi always used to say 'By Swaraj I mean such as the Congress would determine'. This is something definite.

Q—If the Swaraj is to come by settlement, it necessarily means Swaraj in the British Commonwealth?

A —If it is to be by settlement it would be certainly within the British Commonwealth. Otherwise the British cannot agree to a settlement if they (the people) did not remain within the Empire.

Q —Then at the best the Non-co-operation movement is intended for the purpose of bringing sufficient pressure to bear on the Government so that it might come to terms?

A —Yes.

Q —So that those who were working the Non-co-operation programme with a view to attain independence ..

A —Of course the creed is exclusive of nothing from that point of view they are fully correct.

Q —But so far as Non-co-operation is concerned the working of the Non-co-operation programme can only get us Swaraj within the commonwealth by way of settlement and that being the case those who are working the Non-co-operation programme with a view to get Independence are

A —No. I think the better construction would be that if there is any one of that opinion it is bluff. By putting forward a greater demand they may be hoping to secure the less one. Who knows what they really think? Even when they ask for Independence it may be a weapon aimed at Government in order to get a settlement.

Q —Is it possible to get complete Independence by this Non co-operation supposing it is successful—it may be successful for another year?

A —It is possible only just as much as everything is possible under the sun.

Q —If this movement gives 10% success it practically means a success also. When we advert to Mass Civil

Disobedience, that a parallel Government would be set up, it would mean Independence for the particular area for the particular time. So, those who believe in complete Independence must set about starting parallel institutions?

PANHIT MOTILAL NEHRU: We always hear of the Maratha ditch.

A.—We have ditches everywhere.

MR. PATEL. With regard to the parallel institutions in this country as they have got in Ireland, all this talk about complete Independence is moonshine?

A.—I regard that a parallel Government is impossible unless it is accompanied by force. Merely a civil parallel Government is not in my opinion possible and therefore Non-co-operation, even if it succeeds in setting up some parallel institutions, cannot, unless it is backed up by force which is out of question in a non-violent movement, eliminate Government. You must resort to physical force to gain complete Independence. Beyond this stage the Irish people have not yet reached or want to reach immediately, that is to say, this non-violent movement may be regarded perhaps sufficient to bring us Swaraj within the Empire by way of settlement but it is certainly not at all adequate to get Independence.

Q.—You will agree with me that parallel institutions may also go a great way in bringing pressure to bear on Government in order to come to terms with us?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Is it not that parallel institutions are needed for the purpose of achieving Swaraj?

A.—Only for this purpose. Parallel institutions may immediately bring pressure to bear on Government and

Q—thus may bring Swaraj within the Empire though they are also necessary for the purpose of attaining Independence

Q—Now do you consider it practical politics to have parallel institutions with a view to Independence?

A—No Merely parallel institutions how far so ever developed they may be unless they are backed by force, cannot win you Independence

Q—Even independently I ask you as a practical man to tell me whether in this country it is practical politics to think of starting parallel institutions throughout the length and breadth of the country with a view to substitute when we are able to destroy the existing institutions?

A—I have not understood the question

Q—Do you think in this huge country it is possible to establish parallel Government?

A—It is not possible

Q—And the use of these parallel institutions, however small their number may be is to be restricted in order to bring pressure to bear on Government with a view to settlement?

A—Certainly

Q—Now talking about these parallel institutions take National Education We have got in this country a very very small number of National institutions since the Non-co-operation movement and you will agree with me that most of them are starving for want of funds

A—Yes quite true

Q—If it is possible to attack and capture the existing institutions such as Local Self Government institutions the Municipal institutions that would help us

Q—“materially in this movement?” Instead of “thinking of starting a number of rival institutions” our attempt should rather be directed towards taking into possession the existing Government institutions as far as possible?

A—Certainly we can take for instance the Local Self Government. In the Poona Municipality we could give addresses to Mahatma Gandhi or Tilak or Hakimji. That is a distinct sign of our being on the way to capture

Q—To capture say the Municipalities and Local Boards. Then you can easily capture all the schools managed by these institutions?

A—Not necessarily by being strong in the municipalities so long as you get Government aid. But you get by a lot.

Q—You are afraid that even mere capturing of municipalities and Local Boards by the Non-co operators would not place them in a position to nationalise the schools conducted by them?

A—No. In my statement I have only stated we can win greater freedom over Local Self Government.

—You are afraid that the Government would be a great impediment in our way if we were to nationalise Municipal schools if we are attempting to nationalise municipal schools and Local Board schools?

A—If we get help for that in the councils then the effect of our capturing them will be that we will get more power over our municipalities.

Q—You know that education is a transferred subject and do you agree with me that if the nationalists were in a majority in the Legislative Councils with a minister responsible to them all these existing



Municipal and Local Board schools can be run on the lines approved by us?

A.—Yes, I think it is quite possible

Q.—And do you not think that even when the present conditions pass and you go into the councils, with a majority you can push that policy forward and secure freedom over the extensive operation of the act itself?

A.—Yes

Q.—Do you also agree if the Nationalists were in the majority in the councils, it would be easy to put on a financially sound basis the existing national institutions which have been started since the Non-co-operation movement and are starving for want of funds?

A.—Yes, I have always thought it possible that Government may be induced to give grants to local educational institutions apart from any conditions being imposed on them. A proposal was already afoot to give a certain lump sum as a grant to the Hingne school without inquiring into the work they did. In that way we in the municipalities give grants without looking into the private affairs of private schools. Similarly the funds can be supplied by Government also

Q.—If the minister is ours and he has the support of the majority of the legislature, than he can easily give grants to all the institutions that were started since the Non-co-operation?

A.—Not all, but such as are deserving

Q.—But I want to know from you, supposing the Municipalities and the Local Boards are captured by the Non-co-operators and they think that in all the educational institutions they are conducting Charkhas

should be introduced. Would it be possible if the Government does not come in our way ?

A.—We will be able to introduce Charkhas into our schools. The same policy could be easily developed.

Q.—But if the Government comes in your way, you cannot ; supposing it does interfere, then it shall be a distinct impediment. So it is necessary that you must have your own minister in the Legislative Council supporting this policy.

A.—Quite right.

Q.—Perhaps you remember, Mr. Kelkar, that the Thana District Board passed a resolution sanctioning 3000 rupees for the purpose of organising picketing of liquor shops and that resolution was vetoed by Government, and therefore the Local Board cannot undertake picketing. Suppose you had a nationalist majority in the Legislative Council with a minister responsible to them, not Dr. Paranjpye but Mr. Patel; I want to know from you whether it would not have been possible for the District Board to organise picketing.

A.—I will give an instance myself. Skillfully avoiding the veto of Government, this Municipality allotted funds for picketing. No objection is taken to that. For giving address to this Committee, previous sanction under the Municipal Act was asked for. But the funds for the ceremony were refused.

Q.—Now take the case of your Municipality. Your Municipality passes a resolution in favour of local option. We have representatives of Excise Departments, and they all have supported it. Suppose Excise is a transferred subject. Supposing there is a nationalist majority in the Legislative Council with a minister:

Q—If responsible to them he would have granted the right of local option at once he would have accepted your recommendations. At least we could have driven Government to that.

A—It is possible.

Q—Now you will perhaps agree with me that so far as the veto in transferred subjects is concerned, it is a different thing from a veto in regard to reserved subjects. The veto is the veto constitutional veto, which exists in no other civilised countries where there is full constitution. There is a veto. But so far as transferred subjects are concerned they might exercise it. But as regards reserved subjects they are entitled to it.

A—With regard to transferred subjects it is difficult and almost impossible for them to go on exercising the veto.

Q—Government has done it twice. Exercise is a transferred subject. Do you think it would be impossible for the Governor to exercise his veto?

A—It would be.

Q—You were talking about the Brahmin Non Brahmin question. Do you think if the Brahmans and the Non Brahmans were working together in the Legislative Council these differences are likely to be settled earlier than by the Brahmans remaining outside?

A—Certainly by pursuing and developing our policy which we are advising. I see before me instances; there are Non Brahmans who are now followers of Mahatma Gandhi putting on Khaddar starting institutions of their own for untouchables and doing a lot of things openly attempting friendship with Brahmans.

Q—You see that the Constructive Programme laid down at Bardoli among other things, contained items regard-

ing education, National Education, Liquor Khaddar and Charkhas So all these items—most important items—in the Constructive Programme can be much more expeditiously and effectively worked by the Nationalists if they were to capture the Municipalities, Local Boards and also the Legislative Councils?

A.—I have expressed the same view in my statement There is nothing inconsistent between the two

Q.—And you will also agree that at present as much attention of the country should be devoted to the working out the Constructive Programme as possible?

A.—yes

Q.—And no means should be left untried which would help in the working out of that programme?

A.—Yes, in fact if unity is secured the whole item of constructive Non co operation would be pushed forward with a vigour which you have not seen before

Q.—We talked about the Provincial Councils We now take the Legislative Assembly. Perhaps you remember that recently the Legislative Assembly has granted 35 lakhs of rupees for the Empire Exhibition Do you know it?

A.—I have heard that

Q.—You know how our people are treated Do you think if the Nationalists were in the majority in the councils they would have granted that sum?

A.—No.

Q.—Our idea is to work the Constructive Programme Very well, Mr. Kelkar, I want to argue to a certain extent about the visit of the Prince of Wales That is a very important thing If the Nationalists were in a majority in the Legislative Assembly and there was a mandate from the Congress that the Nationalists

should protest against the Punjab and the Khilafat wrongs, do you think the Duke of Connaught would have been able to open the council? That means simply by refusing to vote you would have got the the things all right.

A.—But you know what was actually done in Poona. An address was refused to the Prince in Poona. Similarly with regard to the address given to the Prince of Wales in the Legislative Assembly here and in various Legislative Assemblies

Q.—And you would have refused large sums of money in the celebrations in honour of the Prince of Wales and perhaps during the last two years the Legislative Assembly has voted new taxation to the extent of 39 lakhs of rupees

A.—Yes, I think that might have been saved to a certain extent

Q.—You would have refused to vote

A.—Yes, if we were in a majority. Even in the minority we would effectively oppose it

Q.—Supposing the Congress gives a mandate that the Nationalists should capture the Legislative Assemblies and the Provincial Councils and for that purpose carry on an intensive propaganda in the country from now, do you not think it is very likely that the Nationalists would be able to capture these institutions?

A.—I admit that in some cases we might meet with the impediment of the extensive electorate. I know what possibilities are there. I have not lost sight of them. All the same it is worth trying

Q.—You suggest that the Congress should assume the position of neutrality. Would it not be much better if the Congress at its next Session gives a mandate to

the country that attempts should be made seriously to capture the whole machinery of Government ?

A.—I do not put it so strong. I say instead "Get things in progressive realisation." But at present the Congress government is worse than a bureaucracy.

Q.—Now Mr. Kelkar, apart from the many advantages of entering into the councils, I want to know, do you not agree with me that the councils are full of potentialities for doing harm, if not good to the people ?

A.—Yes, destructive work is much easier.

Q.—It is not so much a question of what we actually do, but what we can do most effectively. The results would come by and by. You were telling in reply to my friend Mr. Rajagopalachar the progress that would otherwise have been possible under a Nationalist regime has not been achieved because the Nationalists did not go into the councils ?

A.—That is my view.

Q.—That means that the moderates have not been doing what you consider they should by their attitude ?

A.—Quite so.

Q.—They are doing decided harm to the country ?

A.—I would not perhaps go so far in criticising them.

Q.—Even if you cannot achieve anything, it is necessary that we should prevent harm being done to our cause.

A.—Of course. The destructive work is the first stroke.

Q.—I want to know one thing. We have unfortunately the Moderates and the Nationalists divided. Now supposing we are successful in capturing the Legislative machinery of the Government and thus are able to oust the moderates from the councils, I would like to know from you where they (moderates) would be in the country ?

A — In their own comfortable homes in the country !

Q — But do you not agree with me that some of the advanced Moderates would join us ?

A — Yes This is the only way to nationalise the Moderates.

Q — You say that those who are weak Moderates will sit at home ?

A — Yes they will be eliminated and the stronger ones will come and join us

Q — There will be no two parties ?

A — They will be within one big party

Q — You have already told us that the council is one of the many methods to attain our end You will also agree with me that our real work, our real battle field is the Congress ?

A — The Congress is not a battle field The council is the real battle-field The Congress is the recruiting ground

Q — Our real work is that our people in the Congress

A — Yes preparing in the Congress and fighting in the councils.

Q — But do you not think that by entering into the councils the prestige of the Congress will be affected ?

A — No

Q — Even if it does in the eyes of some people, do you think considerations outweigh the advantages ?

A — The thing is clear When the Congress by a majority passes the Council policy the question of prestige would not come in

Q — Will it not be regarded by our opponents as complete surrender by the Non-co-operators ?

A — No A deliberate considered opinion by the Congress resolution to capture the councils ? Oh no It is not a question of prestige at all The Congress has as it were only reconsidered the matter It has a right to change its tactics.

Q.—Then, do you think, in your opinion Government wants us in the councils, we the Non-co-operators ?

A.—I would refuse to look at it from that point of view.

Q.—I want to know your own feeling in the matter. Do you think Government would relish our going ? For the present they are saying as soon as you decide to go into the councils they will oppose you. My opinion is that once you decide to enter the councils, they will extend the term of the present councils by one year.

A.—May be.

Q.—They will put all obstacles and they will add beams to the fire. Now you were talking about elimination of the item of the boycott of Courts. I want to know, do you not think that it has been a great injustice to the class of pleaders ?

A.—I have said that in my statement.

Q.—And you agree with me hitherto they have led the public life of this country ?

A.—Certainly.

Q.—But surely you do not want to eliminate it altogether, namely, we should not ask litigants not to resort to courts ?

A.—I have been a lifelong advocate of Panchayats. People do not do this.

Q.—Establishment of Panchayats is a remedy and carrying on vigorous propaganda in the country asking litigants as far as possible to resort to the Panchayats.

A.—That is the remedy.

Q.—Why do you say then that this item has made the Non-co-operation a laughing stock of Government ? Merely because we have asked the pleaders to give up their practice ? .



A —You are putting it too specifically—you may preach it as a general principle and not make it an item as creed

Q —As regards boycott of courts there are two items One is asking the litigants to boycott courts and the other is asking lawyers to give up their practice Now you agree that it is desirable that litigants should be asked to boycott the courts but you do not agree that the pleaders should be asked to boycott the courts?

A —We should all be in the same line pleaders or non pleaders

Q —So your objection is not to the whole item regarding boycott of courts but only to a part of it Your objection lies to one half namely asking the lawyers to give up practice Do you mean to say that the litigants should not resort to the courts as it makes the Congress a laughing stock?

A —I want that item itself to be omitted and I want it to be put in a general way—that is drop the word lawyer from it Ask litigants generally to give up courts and resort to arbitration but not ask lawyers to give up practice Also there are other things which must be boycotted by the people Also there were other professions I would say put a comprehensive boycott on all Departments if it is a necessity

Q —Instead of dropping that item regarding the lawyers supposing the Congress were to say those lawyers who can afford to give up their practice should do so while those who cannot afford will contribute a quota of their income to the National Fund Would you be satisfied?

A —There is no reason why they alone should be victims.

Q —Those who can afford? \*

A.—So many other people can afford. Why should lawyers alone be chosen ?

Q.—The only reason that would appeal is that they are the best workers if they can afford to do so.

A.—It is a most sinister compliment.

Q.—Now much has been said by Mr. Rajagopalachar that higher services are not under the control of the minister. You are aware that although the higher services are not under the control of ministers, still the subordinate services are under the control of the ministers and if the Secretary or the Assistant Secretary whose appointment and dismissal is not in the hands of the minister, does not carry out the wishes of the minister as expressed by the Legislative Assembly, then it is open to him at any time not to give him any support. We can make it impossible for him.

A.—Mr. Chintamani e. g., is doing things much better than Dr. Paranjpye. I know, however, what can be done and what cannot be done.

Q.—You advocate the policy of obstruction in the council. It has been said that we are going back to the pre-non-co-operation days as the Moderates who were then in possession of the Congress never adopted obstruction as their policy.

A.—No, in fact they have never. They say co-operation wherever possible and opposition wherever necessary. We just reverse the order: obstruction wherever possible and co-operation wherever inevitable.

Q.—You told Mr. Rajagopalachar a choice whether the items regarding the boycott of courts and the boycott of schools on the one hand and the boycott of councils on the other hand were to be given up, you would rather allow the boycott of councils to remain and ask

the Congress to eliminate the other two. That gives an impression that you are not so strong on the question of entering the councils as in the matter of

A — I am sorry if I have really given that impression. I only wanted to put before you how strongly I detest the boycott of courts and schools remaining in the Congress resolutions when as a matter of fact you are not able to carry it out.

Q — You are as keen as you should be regarding the elimination of the boycott of schools and the boycott of colleges?

A — Yes.

Q — I want to know your idea about keeping up the item regarding services. There is the item in the Non-co-operation movement that we should ask the police, the military and the civil employees of Government to resign their services. What is your opinion?

A — It is not wise for the Congress to make this an integral part of the resolution. Appeal to the Government servants and so on. What happens is that a preacher when he is addressing a meeting takes the general authority of the Congress and especially so because there is very little responsibility on him and abuses Government servants.

Q — Quite so. What is your opinion about the boycott on British goods?

A — It is not possible to carry it out at once. It should be developed.

Q — You are in favour of it.

A — Cloth would be the first thing for example.

Q — What is your opinion about the Congress interesting itself in the organisation of labour?

A — Certainly it comes within the sphere of the Non-co operation movement.

Q —With regard to private defence, it is quite clear that the right of self-defence must not be taken away by the Congress Full right of defence, if necessary, should be given for meeting violence ?

A —Yes, certainly

Q —You cannot define the limits of private defence

A —The better policy is not to mention violence specifically

Q —Without mentioning violence you can do it ? Now what is your view about giving security ? It is a matter of self respect We at present under the rules of the Working Committee—I do not know which—we do not give security whilst we are under trial that the authorities take advantage of it and prolong the trials for months and months and keep them in jail Do you think it would be wise not to give security ?

A —I will put it in two ways In this matter two things should prevail The self respect of the man and the advice of the lawyer If he thinks it expedient for the ends in view he should be allowed to give security. If his self-respect militates, I leave it to the individual The Congress should not interfere with it

Q —I have not been able to understand the term Responsive Non co-operation

A —I have always thought that even in the matter of Civil Disobedience, unfortunately things are such that the initiative rests with the Government It is only as a matter of response that you disobey, therefore, I put it as Responsive Non-co-operation—with a view to practise Civil Disobedience that is responsive

Q —The policy of response would be there—in matters of response unless Government take the initiative. Would you non co-operate in the council wherever

Q — This is not the answer

A — Let me illustrate it. If you ask me under what category you will put Mr Godrej, I will not look to his past conduct but call him a Non co-operator protem as he throws his lot with the people as against Government. We now know from Government that they have struck him off the list of patronage.

Q — That is true. Opposing the Government in one particular very strongly and on all other occasions to support the Government would you call him a Non-co-operator?

A — It depends ...

Q — A man is a Congressman at one time and is not a Congressman at another. We are discussing an extreme case. That reply must go with this reservation only is an extreme case. Suppose a man opposes the Government once in a year.

A — Just as a man becomes a Congressman by paying four annas.

Q — Will he remain a Non-co-operator for that year as tolerably as he would be a Congressman?

A — No question of toleration or non toleration.

Q — Where is the description relevant?

A — A man pays four annas to sign his form and becomes a Congressman for the first time. My answer is this. What is the limitation you fix for one opposing the Government? So long as the people remember that particular act—anti Government act—he will be a Non co operator.

Q — Although the people may remember a thousand other .

A — That which would be uppermost in mind will decide. The criterion will be whether a particular man has done something against the Government or for the

Government For the moment he is a Non-co-operator I will give one more answer I go to maxim, 'Saints have a past, and sinners have a future'

Q.—If it is your opinion that one act of opposing the Government or any other thing which is enough to make him a Non-co-operator do you not think that you are running the risk of making this whole movement futile?

A.—As soon as he begins to be a co-operator again, you will drive away that co-operator You have forgotten the past services of the pleaders. Will you drive them from the fold? It is a light of stars lasting for a time Is Non-co operation a label to carry to the end of his grave? To day he is a co-operator, to-morrow he may be a Non-co-operator It is a game of sea saw Sinners have a future and saints have a past

HAKIM AJMAL KHAN TO MR KELKAR.

Q.—I want to know whether you are in the knowledge of these things Have you heard of a Fatwa?

A.—I have heard of it

Q.—You are aware that they clearly hold that it is wrong to forcibly convert a Hindu to Mahomedanism

A.—I have heard of Hindu but not Mahomedan meetings in condemnation of the Malabar Atrocities

Q.—I am asking about certain facts

A.—I have heard of them.

Q.—You have also heard that Khulafat has condemned the Malabar Mahomedans?

A.—At what place?

Q.—In Bombay

A.—I hear it for the first time At any rate that resolution was not advertised as much as it should be

Q.—It has been published in the papers

A.—It did not get a wide publicity. I have no doubt as to the state of mind of certain Mahomedans whom I know and believe but I want some positive action in a positive manner about this.

Q.—Muslim League has passed a similar resolution.

A.—I do not know it. But it must have been passed.

Q.—Are you aware that Mahomedan speakers have condemned this?

A.—I had no occasion to know that.

Q.—Are you aware that Malabars have fought against the Government?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Musalmans have not declared it openly but the Mahomedans altogether appreciate your remarks that the Mahomedans have not full-throatedly condemned this. But do you know that was because they thought that the real fight was between the Malabars and the Government?

A.—They should certainly have framed the resolution as to create no misunderstanding. The condemnation could have been discriminative. I do not think it was impossible.

Q.—They have made it clear in the resolution, that so far as the Government was concerned, they sympathised with the Mahomedans and so far as the Hindus were concerned, they condemned the Mahomedans.

A.—I have already said that certain resolutions may have been passed. My contention is regarding the want of full-throated advocacy.

Q.—Well, the whole Maharashtra and specially Mr. Kelkar have maintained the boycott of councils.

A.—I have said openly in this week's Kesari, I have declared it. It is not a question of going out of the Con-

gress it is not a question of entering into the councils so long as the Congress does not allow it. You have received my letter. My position is exactly what I wrote to you in that letter. In return I would ask this that preaching of these views ought to be tolerated. One thing is certain that if the Congress confirms the boycott you cannot remain in office. As regards the Provincial organisation it is a matter for the electors and me not even for the Committee. I may resign to-morrow. Or the electors may throw me out.

Q—Mr. Kelkar having regard to the rule that in the representative institutions where the majority prevails is it open—do you think it is open—to the office bearers who may share in a minority view to preach their view as such office bearers?

A—This is not a cabinet business. I do not admit that even all the Congress Presidents put together are a cabinet.

Q—Then have you considered what the result of such a procedure would be when the office bearers of the Congress go and preach against the mandate of the Congress which is given by the majority?

A—I do not regard every resolution as a mandate.

Q—Would you not preach it?

A—It is a matter of commonsense. It is not a matter of rule.

Q—Is it proper for office bearers of the Congress to go against the majority view of the Congress?

A—Certainly otherwise how can changes be brought in the resolutions? The electors will throw me out if they think it is necessary.

Q—But I want to know your view.



A —It varies with localities in different conditions

Q —If each province has different views, some in favour and the other against, and if each province preaches its own view what would become of the prestige of the Congress as a whole and the object ?

A —I cannot give a general answer to it

Q —Different component parts go on pulling in different ways ?

A —Your objection is only to the office bearers I can see that the better course for the officials would be not to remain in office

Q —Even if the majority of the electors want them ?

A —Yes, I would say even

Q —There should be a rule debarring ?

A —That rule is not necessary It is a question of propriety That may be settled between the electors and office bearers The question is of the right of the Congress to interfere with the right of electors

Q —What is the object of your trying to secure unity between different sects Hindus, Parsees and Musalmans ?

A —To secure the maximum common effort to push on the cause of Swaraj

Q —Do you think that object can be gained if the office-bearers of the Congress Committees go against the majority view of the Congress ?

A —If the electors think that a particular man should remain in office then the Congress has no right to say how the matters are governed in that particular province If it means to do away with a man who expresses a view in any way opposed to any part of the Congress, he should not remain in office The Congress is competent to do that The Congress should consider twice and so long as it has not passed such a

rule, it is a matter between the electors and the office-bearers

DR ANSARI TO MR KELKAR

Q—Do you recommend the removal from the Non-co-operation programme of certain items such as the boycott of councils the boycott of law courts of Government educational institutions and Government service?

A—I have stated in detail in my statement In a comprehensive way everything remains

Q—You want these things I ask you after the removal of these items from the programme what would remain of the Non-co-operation programme?

A—I define Non-co-operation In my statement I have defined it Resistance by every man in every possible way These things remain details go

Q—After the removal of these items Non-co-operation still remains?

A—It remains I do not think there is any inherent objection to these details They are not undesirable but you should not mention them so specifically making them integral parts of a particular resolution

Q—Would you make a general opposition to Government in all possible ways?

A—Yes

Q—What would be then the difference between the position of the Congress after Non-co-operation and before the Non-co-operation programme was taken up?

A—My meaning of Non-co-operation is the resistance, which was contemplated by the Congress before Non-co-operation was taken up

Q—In other words you go back to the position which the Congress had before Non-co-operation was taken up?

A —After Amritsar and before Calcutta

Q —And when you give up practically the principle and the programme of Non-co-operation

A —I do not give up the principle

Q —At least that is how I am afraid it can be understood  
When you go back to the position after Amritsar and before Calcutta Then your position would not be of a Non co operator but general opposition to Government

A —Our policy remains and principles continue

Q —But the programme of Non co-operation would go

A —It will not go It will remain there in idea and it will be preached

Q —So you wish the spirit of Non-co-operation to remain but the substance to go

A —You have omitted a thousand other items and therefore it is not substantial Because you cannot include others these also must go

Q —Now the programme of Non co operation as such would then cease to exist ?

A —As stated in particular words it would I want modifications

Q —You have just said that Non co-operation as such would be given up When you advocate going into the Councils it would mean that you are going to abandon the programme

A —The details of the programme If you say keep the Constructive programme there would be nothing objectionable in that If you would be satisfied with part of the programme there would be no objection to that

Q —Now as regards Swadeshi I understand from your statement that you are not in favour of hand spun and hand woven cloth only.

A.—One of the remedies

Q.—What are the difficulties as regards the social religious boycott?

A.—Sometimes prosecutions arise by this social boycott business. If he declares it openly, he is dragged to court.

Q.—How far has the question of untouchability progressed in your province?

A.—My province keeps a fair level in the matter. It is not so bad, subject to correction, as Madras for instance. Here the untouchability is not very keen and the preaching of it is generally appreciated.

Q.—May I ask you one or two things? For instance are the untouchables allowed to draw water from the common wells?

A.—The practice is just begun in a few cases. I have heard of a Mahratta Gentleman who has afforded his well for water being drawn by a Mahar. I often judge all persons from the way I myself am preaching it. I say as an Editor of an orthodox paper, when I write open articles, they are not objected to.

Q.—Are they admitted to public schools not Government but private?

A.—In private schools the practice is begun recently.

Q.—Do the untouchables go to the meetings?

A.—Yes, and people do not object to it. In Nagpur the untouchables sat on the same platform as the Shankaracharya, and made speeches. Here I distributed with my own hands prizes to Bhungi winners in Athletic sports.

Q.—In one part of your statement, you say that it is felt that the Khaddar agitation is slightly overtainted with the spirit of Pan Islamism. What did you mean?

A.—I cannot think of the Kabul Army to win Swaraj. I believe after all that this question of Indian politics must be solved in India by Mahomedans and Hindus together

Q—Do you think that the Khulafat agitation has tried to get outside influence to invade us ?

A—Mr Mahomad Ali said it in one or two cases. If I am wrong I am subject to correction. Kabul or Persia if they invade India I would be the first person to condemn it.

Q—Is that the only thing ?

A—Yes the tendency is there to get outside influence and power to arbitrate in matters of Indian politics.

Q—No, I beg your pardon. Khulafat agitation has got absolutely nothing to do with this. In fact it has simply to defend the Islamic countries against the aggression of the European powers, nothing else.

A—I should be very happy if you give me an assurance from responsible leaders.

Q—I think it is in the interest of the Asiatic races and indirectly also for India.

A—I will accept your explanation and proclaim it.

Q—As regards Civil Disobedience, you say that Mass Civil Disobedience, the provinces are not ready for it, but Individual Civil Disobedience, there are individuals who can take it up. Can you say roughly how many individuals there would be in your province who would say they are ready for Civil Disobedience ?

A.—I think if there is a unanimity upon a subject matter of Civil Disobedience, you can bring into the field, I suppose a thousand, or two in this city. In the liquor campaign, 500 people broke the law and were actually prosecuted.

Q —And they would be ready to take up, even the extreme form of Individual Civil Disobedience ?

A —This is the matter with which we have really now commenced. You must take it by stages. It would be proper to say that it is a thing to be taught.

Q —How far these civil resisters, you think, would be prepared to go into jail—say for six months ?

A —I do not think so far as imprisonment goes, any teaching is wanted. They are ready already.

### A STATEMENT OF PERSONAL EXPLANATION \*

Since the publication of my statement of evidence, submitted to the C. D. Enquiry Committee, I am being subjected to constant criticism in the press. And the criticism grew in volume and intensity since the announcement of my resignation of office both as President of the Maharashtra Provincial Congress Committee and as a member of the Working Committee of the Congress. I have nothing to complain of in respect of these criticisms as most of them were free from personal discourtesy and were more or less legitimate. If my critics failed to understand my position completely it was not their fault, as I have been more or less reticent myself, and content with the publication of my statement and with the scrappy news supplied by the Associated Press Agency. A few other criticisms were indeed insulting in a personal sense, and their bitterness was painful. The *Bombay Chronicle*, e.g., was particularly unfair towards the Maharashtra party, and some of its witticisms bordered even on the indecent. But I had made it a point throughout this period

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\**Mahratta*, 3rd September, 1922.

never to rush into the press even in self-defence I knew the *Chronicle* was being wirepulled by persons who were hostile to me for a number of reasons, and my confidence, in the correctness of the position I had taken, helped my general distaste for frequently troubling my journalistic critics with letters addressed to them for publication in their columns. But the material of criticism against me has now so much accumulated, and the controversy itself has reached such a stage that I feel called upon to give up my silence and offer an explanation of my real position in some detail

It appears that my resignation has come upon some of my friends and critics as a surprise I shall therefore briefly explain what it was that caused my resignation, also what my resignation actually means and what it does *not* mean The A. P. Agency has wired a summary of my vernacular statement on this point published in my paper the *Kesari* But it is apparently not enough The position is this Ever since the formation of the Maharashtra Provincial Congress Committee, I was trying to keep the office of its President away from me, and the first president was my senior and respected friend Mr C V Vaidya, M.A., LL.B., the well known author and formerly Chief Justice of the Gwalior State, who was actually proposed by me In 1921 he resigned on the ground of ill health and I was elected in his place In May 1922 I offered my resignation, as I had been by this time elected President of the Poona City Municipality, and the municipal work was bound to take a big slice out of my working hours But my resignation was not accepted, in fact a resolution was passed to the effect that in view of certain considerations (which I shall not mention as being somewhat laudatory of me) I should be requested to reconsider my resignation This I acceded to only in order to reciprocate the good will of my committee and continued in office.

By the middle of July, however, the C D Enquiry Committee was on its way to Poona. The Committee had already issued its questionnaire, and it became known that I was going to ask for certain modifications in the N C O programme. The small hostile element in the Maharashtra Provincial Congress Committee regarded this as an opportune moment to air their grievance, that the post of the Committee's President was occupied by one who was not a whole-hogger, and that the supposed backwardness of the Maharashtra in point of N C O activities was due to the want of faith in N C O, itself shared by me and a few of my friends. I was evidently to be made a scape-goat for the sterile over-enthusiasm of some of the fire eating N C O's in the Maharashtra Committee. A concerted attempt was made by these to put before the Enquiry Committee, in stereotyped or even identical words the complaint that I was standing in their way to success and that they were, as it were helpless against my usurpation of office. When the Committee actually arrived in Poona a few of these people sought private interviews with some of the members, and it was probably decided between them that the President should ask, and he did ask me certain questions as to the impropriety of Congress offices being held by persons who the President evidently meant to say, did not like myself entirely support all Congress resolutions in every detail or wanted to advocate modifications in the N C O programme.

Now all this machination was really too much for me. I at once put in before the Committee a statement, quoting chapter and verse of the Provincial Committee's proceedings, to show that the office of President was sticking to me and not I to the office. I did tenaciously contend before the Committee that this question about office-bearers was being debated since the Bezwada meeting; but that never was any



resolution moved, much less carried, in any meeting of the Working Committee or the A. I. C. C., by which voters were to be forbidden from electing as their office-bearers any men they liked, whether they regarded Congress resolutions as specific mandates or not. But apart from the constitutional aspect of it, the mere questions put to me, having in my opinion, come from a kind of local inspiration, and bearing a sort of censorial aspect, I told the Committee on the spot that I would rather resign my office as President, if that should bring comfort to any members of my Committee. The resignation of my office as a member of the Working Committee naturally followed as a logical consequence. If any thing, it was a higher executive office than that of the President of the Provincial Congress Committee. Having done what my self respect demanded I can now watch with interest the future disposal of the latter office, and can possibly bring home to my opponents that the unwritten dictum, which they maliciously sought to apply to me, would be very nearly impossible of fulfilment so long as we are what we are, and the N. C. O. programme is what it is. In one way I feel thankful to those, who provoked my resignation, for unmuzzling me from conventional restraint and enabling me to voice forth my opinions on the N. C. O. programme with greater freedom than I could do before.

Having related what led to my resignation, I shall now say what my resignation exactly means. Some of my critics have read into it my secession from the Congress. But that is pure imagination. I am not going to break away from the Congress on any account. My resignation only means a protest against certain unnecessary questions put to me by the Chairman of the Enquiry Committee, on the suggestion, as I believe, of certain members of the Maharashtra Provincial Congress Committee. It also means that I am prepared

to give my detractors in Maharashtra a sportsmanlike opportunity to prove, what I do not myself believe, that even when I am so out of their way, they can make the various boycotts more successful and the constructive programme attractive enough by itself. I maintain that notwithstanding my open reservations in the acceptance of the present N C O programme I and my friends have worked with as much zeal as any one else in pushing forward the Congress propaganda and that Maharashtra has, taking all items together, done as much as any other province. My resignation is frankly a challenge to my detractors to do more if they think they can. My resignation is leave, now deliberately taken by me, from my office to push forward my personal views about the future programme of N C O with greater freedom than I could otherwise enjoy. But my resignation is *not* a prelude to any schism or split in the Congress itself. I have a sort of premonition that some at least of the modifications I have been advocating in the N C O programme, will be eventually accepted by the Congress. But even if my expectations are not realised, I shall not leave the Congress but go on advocating my suggestions without accepting any office and as a member of a minority. The *Independent* of Allahabad has, I believe, administered in its columns a solemn warning to me that I should be held responsible if any split occurs in the Congress. I may assure my friend that the warning is unnecessary. I would rather efface myself as a political worker than cause a split in the Congress, in the sense of secession and of forming or joining any organisation adverse to the Congress. With the greatest part of the present constitution of the Congress I am quite satisfied, and if I ever despair of getting any Congress body to accept any views of mine, I shall simply regard that as a public judgment upon their merits for which being a thorough democrat by

instinct, I could not possibly blame my opponents. The people in India as in any other country will have political organisations which they deserve.

Now with regard to my attitude towards N C O it has been variously described as rebellion treachery pusillanimity, conversion to moderation and so on. But none of these epithets are I think deserved by me and my friends who are advocating certain modifications in the N C O programme. And I shall first briefly show how the charge of rebellion is easily answered. I could be called a rebel if I were going to defy the general authority of the Congress. But I have not so far done so nor am I thinking of doing so in future. I shall always yield my willing allegiance to the Congress and to no other political organisation in the country, as entitled to speak for and in the name of the people. So long as the Congress will be governed by anything like the present democratic constitution it will deserve to be called the sovereign political organisation in the country. I have never been a member of any Moderate organisation or Peace and Progress Society or Amman Sabha. Even when I was not attending the Convention—Congress from 1908 to 1915 I had not joined any other political organisation because I was expecting that the old Congress would some day be revived as it eventually was in 1916 when I signed the creed and attended the Lucknow session. I have spent most of my life in remaining in a minority and if I have to remain in a minority within the Congress again for a few years I shall gladly do so as it is not a novel experience with me. I may have to consider myself as now being in the same relation to the Congress under the regime of the orthodox N C O's as I formerly was under the regime of the orthodox Moderates. That is all. But in return I shall certainly claim to speak on merits against any resolutions of the Congress I may dis-

approve of because I shall therein be exercising the most elementary right of a member of a democratic national organisation. My conduct has not been that of a rebel, in that I have done nothing worse than advocating a change in the policy and the programme of the Congress, even though the name and style of N C O may have to be kept and continued. I have not set up a standard of revolt, I have been perhaps behaving only as an unduly critical follower or adherent. That is all. A writer in the *Servant* or the *Chronicle* has I am told described me as dashless, hesitant and calculating. Perhaps I am so, but these certainly are not the qualities of which rebels are made. One bad name should be quite enough to condemn me, and those who give me both, surely stultify themselves unknowingly. The want of capacity to become the most advanced leader in any movement is one thing and the capacity to lead a revolt against the movement is another. Those who know me will be inclined to give me credit or discredit rather for the former than the latter possession.

The charge of treachery assumes that I had given a certain pledge to my accusers by my speech, writing or conduct, which I have not only now broken but also broken in an unexpected manner. But what are the facts of the case? The pledge in this case may be said to relate to my adherence to the N C O movement. Now while I do claim that, even in suggesting some very radical changes in the N C O programme, I have not given up my adherence to the *principle* or the *spirit* of the N C O movement, I challenge any one to prove that I had ever held forth myself as a blind follower of Mahatma Gandhi, like some others who profess to swear by him and who regard him as endowed with pontifical infallibility. It is well known that I was one of those who voted against the N C O resolution at the special Congress

at Calcutta And even for all the time afterwards, I was looked upon by my detractors as a sceptic or doubter, who had accepted the N C O resolution of the Congress under a sort of protest, for the time being and mainly in the interest of unity If there was any understanding in any direction it was in favour of the N C O programme itself being put in operation for a limited time, whereas the demand is now being made for the programme being kept unmodified and exactly as it is till Mahatma Gandhi is released It is here and by those who make this demand that the pledge is being broken Moreover, even those, who make the demand, know that the Constructive programme by itself and alone is not the original N C O programme as conceived by Mahatma Gandhi or sanctioned by the Congress and preached right up to Bardoli A definite change is being now introduced by the spear point of Civil Disobedience being eliminated from the N C O movement under the pretext that sufficient technical preparation has not yet been made for it But whatever that may be the charge of treachery cannot be levelled against one who had given no pledge to any one beyond giving the N C O programme a trial for a limited period Here again it seems to be forgotten that I could not be simultaneously accused of two contradictory charges. Some say I have been a luke-warm supporter of N C O. from the beginning If that be so my withdrawal of that support cannot be unexpected enough to be treacherous But, again I say I have done nothing that may clash with the true spirit of N C O in withdrawing my support from the triple boycott, which was intended to remain in operation only for a certain period The burden of proof lies on those who seek to prolong it The pursuit of the Constructive programme *for its own sake* no one objects to But one fails to understand how that programme

by itself would bring Swarajya, or why the work in the L Councils must be necessarily regarded as inconsistent with that programme. The boycotts of schools and courts have been tried and have failed and when their repeal is demanded it is urged that the Working Committee at Bardoli and the A I C C at Delhi have practically given the go-bye to them. Well, if that be so, why should any objection be taken to the demand that the Congress itself should be asked, in its full session to *formally* remove the two boycotts at any rate, from the N C O programme? The Congress would be only making itself ridiculous by keeping them on record for an indefinite period, when every one now admits that practically, nothing is being done in the country under that head and no one really thinks that anything can be done in that direction in the near future.

As regards the Legislative Councils, my critics have gone the length of openly saying that I am trying to remove the boycott of Councils because I am hankering after getting into the Council myself. I could see the relevance of the charge if it were true, and I would be prepared to formally sign a pledge that I shall never in my life seek election to any council lower or higher, if that would end the controversy so far at least as I am concerned. But I hate giving the discussion of this question a personal turn, and I would appeal to my critics that they too may show a more charitable mind in dealing with those who on principle, refuse to waste the proportionate resistance, or the spirit of N C O which would be available through the unselfish work of determined opposition to Government in Legislative Councils.

Lastly, I wish to point out that I am not now raising any new issue which I had not raised before, or taking up towards N C O any attitude which I had not taken up previously. The unkindest charge against me is that I have declared my,

opposition to some of the items of N. C. O. only after Mahatmajī's incarceration. But this charge I emphatically repudiate. Mahatma Gandhi himself always knew and openly admitted, in his *Young India* as well as in public meetings, that I had never completely identified myself with all his views on N. C. O. I spoke and voted against the N. C. O. resolution at Calcutta in September 1920. Though for myself I withdrew from the Legislative Council elections even on my way back from Calcutta, in the Congress Democratic Party's meeting at Bombay I pleaded, on principle, for liberty being given to Berar or C. P. friends in the matter of entering the Council, because I thought they may get a majority in their Councils and prove themselves a great obstructive force by working those bodies in true N. C. O. spirit. Speaking on the Congress resolutions on the boycott of schools, I always laid more stress on its constructive side, and even incurred the displeasure of my fire-eating compatriots for doing so. There is not even a single person who can say that I ever spoke in favour of the boycott of law courts in the sense of victimising the Pleader class. In my propagandistic tours before and after the Nagpur Congress I administered, wherever I went, a solemn warning that in boycotting pleaders they were playing with fire and doing harm to public life. And I divulge no secret when I say that it was at my strenuous insistence, at the Nagpur Congress, that Mahatma Gandhi agreed to include in the N. C. O. resolution a general clause, appealing to every one in the country, of any class, grade or profession, to put forward his utmost contribution of sacrifice, as pure self-sacrifice was alone the soul of the N. C. O. movement. The view I put before Mahatmajī was that the pleader class was being unnecessarily harassed and hunted out from public life by people who were themselves doing nothing, and I was entreating him to remove the specific odious mention

of the lawyers in the resolution to be drafted. He would not consent to the deletion of that particular word but agreed as I have pointed out above to make the appeal for sacrifice otherwise universal. In the Bezwada A I C C meeting I strenuously opposed the restrictions sought to be imposed upon office bearers in the matter of their election claiming that electors in Congress bodies should be free to elect what office-bearers they chose whether they carried out or not the resolutions of the Congress even applicable to their own case. In the Bombay A I C C meeting I opposed the suggestion about turning the National schools into mere Charkha schools and also opposed the resolution which put a ban upon self-defence in courts or outside physical or legal. In the public meeting in Poona held on the first anniversary day of Lok Tilak's death and attended by ten thousand people when Mahatma Gandhi referred to the supposed want of political faith in the Maharashtra I told him that the faith which Mahatma held for the moment was not the only kind of valid political faith in the world that men like Ranade Tilak and Gokhale would not be what they were if they were without some right kind of political faith and that Mahatma had himself to blame for the unsatisfactory progress of N C O as he had made himself responsible for getting the Congress to lay down an impracticable programme in the name of N C O. This was then but a rebuke for a rebuke but my point is that I had openly proclaimed to the face of Mahatma before ten thousand people within the first year of N C O my firm opinion that many of its items were unworkable and impracticable. Again at the Ahmedabad Congress those of us who were not satisfied with the N C O resolution had long discussions with Mahatma and it is well known that many of us urged our strong objections to the rigid volunteers pledge etc. At Bardoli again I openly



expressed my strong disapproval of his decision and action, and told him that he was putting back the hands of the clock, to which he replied saying "Yes, I know I am doing it, but have 'got to do it" My article in the *Mahratta* on the 'Bardoli affair' which was very strong, was written before Mahatmaji's arrest and was carefully read and noticed by him in the *Young India* I state all this only to prove that I had never from the very beginning, given my blind adherence to Mahatmaji in the N C O programme, and though I admit that he is one of the very few persons whom I sincerely respect for phenomenal self sacrifice and courage of conviction, I have always exercised and freely exercised, my right to oppose him and his programme whenever and wherever I thought I could not honestly agree with him I say all this, however only in self-defence and without any egotism, as I know that I am too insignificant even to be mentioned in the same breath with Mahatmaji If I have done wrong in respect of N C O I have done so all along and *ab initio* I am not turning a somersault or taking up a suddenly inconsistent attitude The mild and genial fire of *Young India* was continuously directed against the Maharashtra throughout the last two years, for the simple reason that Mahatmaji knew that some people in Maharashtra and I myself among them could not be brought in a line with himself in point of faith in the present N C O programme

Lastly I would deal with the charge that I am doing all this through a craven fear of the jail I confess it would be extremely indelicate for me to say anything even in self defence, on this point But the crude mentality of the accuser unfortunately leaves me no choice To many of my accusers I would simply point out that they should first *earn* the necessary qualification themselves by going to jail *before*

charging others with a desire to save their skin. They have yet to get the hallmark of jail life on their body which I have at least once received. And frankly speaking, as a writer in the *Bombay Chronicle* itself pointed out at the time of the liquor shop picketing campaign in Poona, it is not my fault that I was not sent to jail. When I signed the manifesto at Bombay along with 30 or 40 others after the conviction of the Ali Brothers, did I not expect to be prosecuted? As soon as an order was issued under Sec 144 in Poona against picketting I deliberately broke the order twice, and I was not sent to jail only because the authorities were pleased to be content with the general policy of fines. And lastly I may say that I have been the declared editor and publisher of not one but two Nationalist papers which were the mouthpieces of Lok Tilak himself, for a large number of years and during the most stormy times that ever passed over India, and surely the most perverse of my critics could not honestly say that I never expected all this time to be prosecuted and sent to jail. It really pains me to have to say all this about myself. I am after all a small weak man with no pretensions to distinction, and even my critics will admit that I am not given to bluster and braggadocio. But I too can hit out where attacked. And I may say to some of my critics that when the Congress decides to launch general Civil Disobedience they will find me in my proper place before many others who have been counselling the withdrawal from Civil Disobedience on the lame pretext that Khaddar has not been sufficiently woven or worn or that violence may ensue in any distant part of India. The face of the N. C. O. movement has been fundamentally changed by those who have given up the idea of C. D. If that be regarded as necessary let us all accept the situation frankly and without any fear of what may be said about it. But there is no wisdom in pretending

that the present programme of N. C. O. can be carried on, as it is, indefinitely or even till Mahatmaji returns to us. And the pretence becomes only aggravated by the reckless or wicked criticism of those who honestly demand modifications in the programme. I am absolutely sure that the publication of the whole body of evidence before C. D. Enquiry Committee, oral as well as written, will bear me out in most of the modifications I have demanded. I do not say this in malice or in a spirit of disparagement of anybody. But I claim that I too ought not to be charged with malicious and unfounded allegations.

## KELKAR ON THE C D E REPORT

### LECTURE IN BOMBAY

At a public meeting held on Wednesday last in the open grounds of the Gandharva Vidyalaya attended by over three thousand people, Mr N. C. Kelkar, delivered an address on the question of the Civil Disobedience Committee's report. Mr Kelkar commenced with fiercely denouncing his calumniators some of whom had gone the length of insinuating that he was in the matter of his present propaganda, acting in concert with certain very high officials. That, Mr Kelkar said, was a white lie. He had opposed some of the measures of Non-co-operation as impracticable, even from the very beginning. The main programme he had adopted for a time, specified by Mahatma Gandhi himself, out of loyalty to the Congress. But it was, he thought, his duty to demand changes when the non political programme of so-called construction threatened to be eternal, or at least till Mahatmaji's return from the jail. Mahatmaji himself, however, he con-

tended, would not like this kind of slave mentality. He would like people in his absence to think out changes in the programme of practical politics. And men like Hakimji and Panditji who are rightly called Mahatmajis's right and left hands, had suggested entry into the Councils and confirmation of the suspension of boycott of schools and courts, only after entering into Mahatmajis's own real spirit in the matter. After explaining in detail how his own suggestions, made in his written statement before the C D Enquiry Committee, were justified and granted in the recommendations of the Committee's report, Mr Kelkar proceeded to argue the question of the entry into the Councils. Thus, he said, was not inconsistent with, but would only give point to and heighten the importance of, both the immediate, Constructive programme and the Civil Disobedience when it would come in due course. The L. Council was like the lever and the brake combined, of the locomotive machinery in the railway engine or the power house of administration and the only effective way of stopping or controlling this wrong going machine is to capture that lever and not trying to pull out a screw here and a screw there of the different wheels or cranks, or to jump out and bolt away. In conclusion Mr Kelkar reminded the audience that he and the men of his party were prepared to give any proof that may be demanded of the sincerity and disinterestedness of their advice about the Council-entry by going to the length of resigning for ever their own chance to get into the Councils. He would be right glad if some of the extreme and whole-hogging Non-co-operators would themselves enter the Councils and capture them, if they thought they were the only persons in this world who were safe and absolutely above temptations offered by wily officials.

Mr Kelkar's lecture was throughout punctuated by cheers and sympathetic echoes. Mr. Patel wound up by empha-

sising the fact that the old programme was professed a one-year programme, and that changes were rightly suggested by the C D E Committee.

### MR KELKAR'S SPEECH AT THE A I C C \*

Mr N C Kelkar made a speech to the following effect in the Calcutta meeting of the All—India Congress Committee. He said that at that stage he did not wish to add to the volume of discussion on the subject. But he would open his lips only to clear up one or two points from the point of view of Maharashtra. But when he said Maharashtra he would give them one necessary caution. He did not wish to sail under false colours, or to assume any unreal or undeserved representative character. A journalistic friend of his had observed that Maharashtra was at present a newspaper entity. He would go further and say, if it pleased his friend, that Maharashtra was a mere human entity, for that would avoid even the sort of representative character which a newspaper possesses. They might take what he would say as merely his own and attach any value to it or not as they liked. His work of speaking about Maharashtra had been made easy by speaker after speaker coming forward to declare that the attitude of Maharashtra in the present controversy had been sincere, frank and courageous. He gratefully thanked these gentlemen for the compliment they had thus given. But he could not take it as an unmingled compliment. He could take it only with some mental reservation. For this very attitude of the Maharashtra was at one time characterised as a rebellion. But fortunately Maharashtra was now in good

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\**Mahratta*, 3rd Dec. 1922.

company and the artillery of abuse may now be turned towards upper India. There was another reason why we would take the compliment with some reservation, for it conveyed by contrast a sinister suggestion that while the Maharashtrians had been sincere and frank, some others had been its opposite. He would however point out that those, of whom that was suggested and the Maharashtrians were indissolubly bound together. Together they opposed the boycott of Councils in 1920, together they accepted the mandate of the the Congress and worked the N C O programme one year in good faith, together they treated the movement as a national strike for a limited period of time and now that it was time to think of suitable changes in the programme they were asking for them together. There may be a slight difference in the phraseology as regards the work in the Councils, but both of them were in the same boat and the speaker solemnly declared that they would stand or fall together. He did not take the bait of the compliment if it was meant to divide them.

But while the charge of rebellion had disappeared another had taken its place viz., the charge of sinfulness and it became all the more terrible as it came from no less a personage than Shri Shankarāchārya. It had been alleged that while the Maharashtrians had originally accepted the essentially spiritual character of the N C O programme they were now denying it that character. Mr Kelkar protested that, that was not the case. He asserted that Maharashtra had accepted the N. C O movement as mainly a political movement. The movement had certainly a spiritual side or aspect to it. But it was not right to say that it was a wholly spiritual movement. A reference to the preamble, the main body and the consequential clauses of the N C O resolutions would show them that the movement was meant to be essentially politi-

cal, its spiritual character was given to it by the recommendation that every Congressman should put in his utmost contribution of self sacrifice towards the movement, as self-sacrifice was essential to its success. It was unselfishness, therefore, in the movement that made it spiritual. But what political movement was there which for its success did not depend upon unselfish work and what political movement therefore was not spiritual, so far as it contained real unselfishness in its workers? Unselfishness was essential to politics but it was not and never could be politics itself. He would make his meaning clear by giving a few illustrations. They all used appetisers at the dinner table but appetisers could not be the dinner itself. Mineral waters cured diseases but they could not take the place of liquids which were necessary to dissolve and digest the food. Lining to a broad cloth was another illustration. Every broad cloth dress must have its lining but the lining could not be the dress itself. If the lining was coarse, that is to say, if a politician was an unscrupulous scoundrel he must feel uncomfortable. If on the other hand the lining was smooth, that is to say if the politician was righteous he might have comfort in addition to success. Similarly, the N C O movement was mainly a political movement though it would certainly be better for all the righteousness it may contain.

As regards the pros and cons of Council-entry, Mr Kelkar said, he would not labour that point because its discussion would only add to tediousness. To the intellectual objector of Council, he would say that he for one was content to take the value of Council work at its most modest valuation and could any one deny that work in the Councils was by no means inconsistent with either the Constructive Programme or the programme of Civil Disobedience? Would not Khaddar only gain by introduction in the Council Halls? Would

not the civil disobedience of a Councillor only heighten its political effect? As for the emotional objector however it was impossible to argue with him. He respected righteous emotion but emotion lost its claim to respect if it indulged in Billingsgate phraseology. One speaker had given the impression that Council work would be as bad as running sullage water back into the kitchen, accepting the metaphor Mr Kelkar would only say that he would not let the water into the kitchen but certainly use it for growing fruit in the kitchen garden of the Councils and if a council could not be used as a useful kitchen garden it could at any rate be turned into a bear garden where confusion would reign supreme. He could think of even a worse name for the Councils. But did not Ramkrishna Paramahansa of Bengal say that the role of the true public worker was the role of a scavenger who would have to sweep the W C of the ignorant and the lowly with the knotted hair of his head? But they might just see the unreasonableness of such bad epithets. A question was put to him as to what attitude he would keep if he entered the Councils. Mr Kelkar replied saying that as a member of the Working Committee who was responsible for the resolution before the house he would declare in favour of carrying out the mandate of the Congress whatever it was at the end of 1923.



## THE CONGRESS AND AFTER \*

'Sadder and Wiser'—these two words have always gone together. But sadness may sometimes go also with jubilation. Has not the poet said "Our sincerest laughter with some pain is fraught ? The whole-hogging N. C O s have gone back from the Congress with a sense of triumph, but, I believe, with a sense of sadness as well. It ought to be so with, at any rate, the more sensible among them. And this sadness must arise from a number of causes. In the first place, as I have hinted above, triumph itself, like any other sweet thing leaves an ultimate or resulting bitter taste in the mouth. Further, those who won at Gya on the strength of a mere numerical majority had, it was somehow evident, not heart enough to enjoy their victory. Perhaps they thought, as M. Gandhi himself declared after Bardoli, that a numerical majority of unthinking followers is an encumbrance and not a help.

Mr. Rajagopalachariar at any rate, must have realised this when, during the discussion in the open session, on the resolution on future debts, he was himself inclined to withdraw or to suitably amend the resolution if the House would allow him to do so. But the House refused to take the hint. It was a packed house, and a packed house, like the one at Gya, always likes to go one step further than its favourite leader. How should the momentum of accumulation go in vain ? The House thought Mr. Rajagopalachariar could not become sensible except at the cost of seeming to be weak. And why should he expose himself to that humiliation when they were, in a large majority, ready to do whatever was necessary to be done or would even pass in the name of M. Gandhi ?

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\**Mahratta*, 7th. Jan. 1923.

Then again, the victory they won at Gya was a Pyrrhic victory. It cost them more than what they gained by it. At best they gained the affirmation, in an accentuated form, of the N C O resolution of 1920. But they lost the wonderful unity in the nation which prevailed for about two years since then as the result of an understanding among the opposing parties.

That unity is now shattered by the resolutions of the Gya Congress. Want of unity is a great handicap upon any National work, and the whole-hogger N C O leaders will realise the difference between the past and the present when they set about the self-imposed work of collecting men and money upto a definite number by the end of March next. They will find that the spirit of those who returned from Gya is entirely different from the spirit of those who returned from Calcutta in 1920, under almost similar circumstances. The ranks of N C O's have not been materially strengthened since then. In 1920 Mr Bipin Chandra Pal's amendment to M. Gandhi's N C O resolution was defeated by 161 to 135 votes in the Subjects Committee. What may be regarded as a corresponding test amendment in the Gya Congress of 1922 was that moved by Mr. Shrinivas Aiyengar and this was defeated in the Subjects Committee by 181 against 107 votes.

There is no doubt a difference in the proportion of the figures on either side for the two years. But it can be explained by the packed nature of the present Subjects Committee which is the new All India Congress Committee. Many who were present at the Calcutta Session in 1920, have, during the last two years, practically retired from Congress affairs whether they may technically still be Congressmen or not. We may cite many of our Bengali friends like Mr. B. Chakravarti and his group, Mr. Baptista, Mr.

Jinnah, Mr Khaparde, as instances in point We may give some other figures from the same point of view, but with a more convincing meaning In 1920 the votes in the whole House on M Gandhi's resolution were 1852 as against 908 on Mr. Pal's amendment This year the votes on a similar test amendment as against the official N C O proposition were as 890 to 1740

It will thus be evident that the proportion of 1 to 2 has been kept up notwithstanding the continuous N C O agitation and propaganda during the last two years This would certainly not have been the case if the nation had entirely approved of the orthodox N C O programme An independent testimony is also afforded if we consider the gains and losses of notable individual Congressmen on either side Men like Chakravarti, Pal, Khaparde, Baptista, Jinnah, Hassan Imam, Bhurgri who have not joined the Congress since then, have of course remained where they were Not one single individual out of these has been converted to the N C O programme

As for men who have remained in the Congress, those exactly who stood to oppose the N C O programme in 1920, will be found to have voted against Mr Rajagopalachariar's resolution in the present Congress With the exception of Mr T. Prakasam and Kasturiranga Aiyengar, those that signed Mr Pal's amendment at Calcutta have all declared themselves at the Gya Congress in favour of contesting elections Between Mr Kasturiranga Aiyengar and Mr Prakasam however they make not two whole-hoggers but only one and one-half, if we take into account the C D Enquiry Committee's report Messrs Das, Kelkar, Jayakar, Satyamurti, Shamlal Nehru, Rangaswami Aiyengar, Moonje, Anye, Gokhale, stand to-day practically where they were in 1920 On the other hand we have stalwarts

like Hakim Ajmal Khan and Pandit Motilal Nehru in favour of the Councils to-day though they voted against them two years ago

The *Swarajya* of Madras says. On the whole we cannot feel that the prospects of the national cause have improved by this division. But these are obviously crocodile tears. At any rate the wisdom has dawned rather too late upon the party represented by the *Swarajya*. This chastening of the spirit would have been appreciated and would also have served a better cause if it had been available at Gya. It would not only have saved a split but also saved the extreme wing of N C O s from the unenviable position in which they find themselves after the split. But quite a different spirit prevailed at Gya. There their one object was to drive things to extremes. And in doing so even Mr Rajagopalachariar allowed himself to stultify himself by turning down his own recommendations and conclusions in the frenzied efforts to turn down the whole report of the C D E Committee. In the Committee's report Mr Rajagopalachariar favoured the suspension of the educational boycott at Gya he favoured the continuation or maintenance of the boycott. He cannot escape the alternative charges of proving too weak on the C D E Committee or too weak in the hands of his compatriots in the Subjects Committee. The stultification was too barefaced to be tolerated except behind the brazen mask of a numerical majority.

But we do not like to waste time in discussing what happened at Gya. It would be more profitable to consider what should be done now that a split has occurred. The majority can go their own way with the central Congress organisation in their hand. And in this connection we may as well state our frank opinion that even in subordi-

nate Congress organisations it is but fair that the representatives of this majority should be allowed, by those of the minority, quite in a sporting spirit, to hold the executive offices. The prochange party, we know, is not so weak or unrepresentative as not to be able to hold its own in any Provincial or District Committees. But a voluntary surrender by them of all the executive offices is required by every consideration whether practical or doctrinaire.

The business of the Congress must go on, and the representatives of the majority are entitled to say that they should have a chance. The minority, moreover, have other things to attend to. The majority resolution makes it an uphill task for the minority to go into the country and preach their principles. For a time they must be prepared to face ridicule, criticism and opposition in all its forms with a determination so well and so boldly expressed by Mr. C. R. Das in his concluding speech at the Congress session that they shall eventually bring the majority in the Congress to their side at the end of the year. Freed from the shackles of office and responsible only to themselves, the prochange party can and should now devote the whole of its energy and resources to a propaganda of their principles, in which though the Council entry may well take the front rank, a few other things like the Swadeshi, Boycott, and constructive National Education may also be properly included. The Gya Congress has passed no doubt a decisive resolution against the Council entry or even the contesting of elections. But the real verdict will be this year given at the polls.

The voter himself is the pivot of the whole situation. If he decides for himself that he shall waste his vote by keeping it to himself, and allow the seat reserved for his constituency, not only to be occupied but used for playing the

## THE NEW PARTY \*

A new political party within the Congress, called 'the Congress-Khilafat-Swarajya party' was formed at Gya, and its manifesto will be published within the next few weeks. I do not doubt for a moment that pro-change Congressmen in every province will join the ranks of the party without any loss of time and strengthen the hands of Messrs Das Nehru and Ajmal Khan in pushing forward the pro-change programme. It will be a wonder if after the prolonged operation in the various disintegrating forces in the ranks of the N C O party the new formation is not readily availed of as a rallying centre.

The fact that even after the apparent split at Gya a new party has been formed within the Congress, and not outside it, has been a puzzle to many people. But the puzzle can be easily explained. In the first place, the new party has still some points of contact left with the Congress, and secondly, as Mr Das observed at Gya, though the new party may be stooping to accept the place of a minority it stoops only in the hope of eventually conquering the majority and the Congress along with it. Personally I think the country cannot do without some national body like the Congress, subject of course to certain modifications in its present constitution and methods and I refuse to be driven out of it, because I want to see the Congress become growingly strong, if also growingly sound in its political policy and its practical programme.

I hear in my ear the mocking voice of the cynic who can see nothing but disaster for the Congress in the near future. But an optimist am I born, and an optimist do I hope to re-

main, in spite of certain obvious tendencies towards the fulfilment of the misanthropic prophecy. I know many people will be inclined to pity me when I maintain that I can still find points of contact between me and the Congress—even the present Congress. My reply is that even now I somehow feel that I have more in common with an association which at least pretends and in fact does possess to a certain extent a representative capacity. If I cannot get a majority in the Congress it may be my own fault, or the present weakness of the unpopular cause for which I stand. But it certainly is not the fault of the constitution.

Last week I called the Congress at Gaya a packed house. I used the word packed only in the ordinary sense of being sorted or arranged closely or according to a particular policy. I had no intention to suggest any fraudulent practice. The *Chronicle* has taken objection to this description of the Congress body, but it ought to know that nowhere have the elections been made on the principle of proportional representation. Mr Das has openly complained that many men could not get elected because they were absent in the jail. And further, it is notorious that a number of prominent Congressmen who would ordinarily be elected delegates had kept themselves aloof from these elections and Congress affairs generally, out of disgust for the methods of intolerance followed by the N C O upstarts. My description of the Congress body as a packed house is not therefore necessarily inconsistent with my assent to the general democratic character of the Congress.

The Liberal Federation and similar other organisations certainly contain a number of illustrious and accurate students of politics, a number of men with a broad outlook on life and a cold vision and also a number of patriotic workers. But in a way they put themselves out of count

by basing their formation upon no sort of a representative constitution. Of course, whether we are within or without a representative body the voice of wisdom, that we could command, will never fail to make itself heard. But in presuming to speak only for ourselves we forfeit certain fundamentals which are essential to be observed in dealing with the kind of government we have got to

Further if there is a mixture in the present Congress of 'unthinking idol worshippers' are not other groups, who profess to think and act politically, beset with men who are also unthinking idol worshippers in their own way? With this difference, moreover that in one case the worshipped idol is that of some heartless European bureaucrat of whom it would be blasphemy to say that he loves India in the other case the worshipped idol is at least that of a selfless patriot saint like Mahatma Gandhi whose one aim is to win complete Swarajya for this country. I think the new party has certainly been well advised in forming itself into a *Congress party* and in resisting the temptation to permanently cut off its moorings from the National Congress.

With this preface I shall now turn to offer certain suggestions with regard to the details of the new party formation. And first with regard to its name, I think the name now chosen is rather too lengthy and complicated. It may be asked what is in a name. But there is at least this in a name that it serves as a catchword, and like every telling catchword, it must be handy, crisp and significant. Brevity is the soul not only of wit, but also of effect. The present name 'Congress-Khilafat-Swarajya party' is too big to be of any use for common parlance. At any rate it may be once for all abbreviated so that the current name of the party may remain as C K Swarajya party, or preferably also simply 'Swarajya party' with the letters C. K. al-



ways taken for granted and peacefully interned in the embossed embroidery of the party's official stationery. And thus not without a reason. The insistence on the obtrusion by the words Congress and Khilafat only serves a need which does not really arise in the present case. There never was nor is there now any question of the Congress and the Khilafat not going together or not being influenced by each other. Both however are only handmaids to Swarajya, and it should be enough if we keep only the word Swarajya in the fore-front.

But if that be regarded as too vague a description. I would even prefer the pointed soliloquy of the Council party. I know that Council-entry is not the only plank in the new party's platform but it is at any rate a sufficiently distinctive property or characteristic of the party for the time being. Our opponents may perhaps agree with me in this matter for that name would supply them with just the handle they require for turning the whole hose of their criticism or ridicule upon us. But I possess sporting spirit enough to give them that advantage. For whatever our other principles may be, our demand for Council-entry is just the point that really happens to distinguish us at this moment from other Congressmen. And our earnestness and insistence upon the principle of Council-entry could easily swallow and digest all their criticism and ridicule. We should no more be ashamed of the new party being called the Council party than a reasonable human being of the facetious description of man as a cooking animal.

'A party is a body of men united for promoting by their joint endeavours the rational interest upon some particular principle in which they are all agreed — so runs Burke's classical definition of party in his *Present Discontents*.' Now is it not clear with reference to the new party that

Council-entry is the one principle upon which the ladies and gentlemen, constituting that party, are agreed more than any other for the time being ? It is useless to pretend that the split in the Congress has not been due more to the question of Councils than to any other question. If Messrs Nehru, Patel and Ajmal Khan had not reported in favour of Council—entry, and had not Mr Das also taken up that position, though of course independently the other recommendations of the C D E Committee would have easily passed muster, as may be guessed by Mr Rajagopalachariar agreeing with the rest and helping the cause of unanimity. If there was no question of Council entry the dead horse of the boycott of schools and courts would not have been whipped as it was done at Gya. Even the boycott of *British goods, as passed by the Subjects Committee*, might have been accepted by the no-change party, and the make-believe resolution of the preparation for Civil Disobedience would not have been thought of. In short it is on the question of Council-entry that the split has come and Council-entry may therefore very fittingly serve as the motto or design on the new party's escutcheon.

At the same time it must be made clear that though Council-entry may be writ large on the fore-front of the party's programme, that by no means exhausts all the principles for which the new party will stand, and in respect of which it differs from the present majority in the Congress. The party manifesto must therefore indicate the positions which it takes on some other matters as well. I will briefly enumerate some of them. Thus the principle of Civil Disobedience is by no means the exclusive monopoly of the whole-hogging N. C. O's. On the contrary the new party not only claims Civil Disobedience as a destructive plank in its platform, but it does not accept the multitudinous and

unnecessary restrictions which have been put upon the practice of that principle in the name of preparation. The majority of the new party, I think, favours spontaneous and local Civil Disobedience without any other preparation than that of promise of peaceful behaviour by volunteers when on the particular duty. I for one am not prepared to accept the Ahmedabad pledge, and had expressed to Mahatmaji my disagreement with him while the pledge was being formed at Ahmedabad.

The party again stands for the advocacy of a discriminating boycott of British goods though at the same time it would cheerfully push on the general cause of Swadeshim and the cause of Khaddar in particular. The new party will, I believe, concern itself with temperance even to the extent of picketing the liquor shops. The advocacy of the constructive side of National Education will be a pronounced item in the new party's programme and as for the destructive side of it viz., the boycott of schools and colleges a large majority of the party will accept the suspension of the boycott as recommended by the C D E Committee and oppose the maintenance of the boycott as passed by the Congress. As for foreign propaganda the new party to a man will I think, support it and it will have this activity in common with the Home Rule Leagues and Swarajya Sabhas which have remained in suspended animation for the last two years.

The new party will I think, whole-heartedly favour the formation of labour unions and peasant unions. And while the formation of co-operative societies may represent its constructive activity, its destructive activity may, if occasion demands it, be represented by the advocacy of labour strikes for a just cause and the non payment of unjust taxes or cesses by peasants, not necessarily in the big name of

Swarajya, but as a legitimate measure of resistance to unlawful acts of lawful authority. The new party will certainly stand by the depressed classes and the untouchables and though it may not approve of the unnecessary stigmatisation of the whole Hindu religion as calculated to alienate the sympathies of the orthodox section of the society it will take all practical steps to remove untouchability and help the uplift of the depressed classes. The acceptance by the new party of the broad principle of Hindu Moslem unity goes of course without saying. The party should, in my opinion, do what the Congress has not yet done viz, forming a scheme of voluntary concessions and sacrifices on either side, so that Hindu Moslem unity may be practically developed in a synthetic manner by village after village and town after town coming forward to sign and accept the scheme and eliminate all Hindu Moslem quarrels within the local unit.

The question of Brahmins vs non Brahmins does not arise equally in all the Indian provinces and the new party may therefore not feel called upon to make any pronouncement upon it except advising the Brahmins in a friendly spirit to make up their quarrels with non Brahmins by all the noble sacrifice that the situation may demand. And lastly taking together local self governing bodies and the legislative councils the new party should unhesitatingly advocate and bring about the capture of both these by men of stern independent national spirit who may even go to the length of signing a formal pledge that they will accept no office in the Government but will cast their vote *against* Government in every case in which opposition and resistance to the will of the bureaucracy will give further evidence of the determination of the people to win Swarajya as speedily as possible. This, in short, is my view of the principles

on which the new party may claim to be based. There are other matters also deserving consideration, but I must postpone them for another article.

### SUGGESTIONS FOR THE NEW PARTY.\*

The constitution of the New Party and its manifesto, will I think, be discussed within the next week or two, when Messrs Das and Nehru will visit Bombay and take counsel with their associates in the New Party. I would, therefore, like to offer a few observations on both these topics.

I expressed my views last week on the question of a name for the New Party. The more I think about it, the more do I feel convinced that its present name, viz. 'Congress-Khilafat-Swarajya Party' is simply unworkable. The 'Swarajya Party' is perhaps too vague a title, but it has not so far been appropriated by any political group in the country, and by being the first to use that name for the New Party, we shall be fulfilling the maxim "possession is nine points in Law." Personally I would like, as I said last week, to give to the party the honest and significant appellation of the 'Council Party'. But I would like to know what the others think of it.

As for a constitution for the New Party, I would really have no constitution as such,—and for several reasons. I do not think that the New Party will have or even need have an existence prolonged over a large number of years. Paradoxical as it may seem, I do not wish a long life to the party, for the simple reason that it must do or die within a brief space of time. Of course I wish the New Party pros.

perity, if not long life, but I want that prosperity to come as quickly as possible.

The triennial Council elections will take place within the current year, and if we do not succeed in convincing and fallying the people of the country in favour of a political fight in the Councils, the New Party may as well shut up its shop and think of something else to do. During the next three years the Council issue will have lost all its attraction, and it would not be worth while to continue the agitation only with a view to win any bye-elections. I do not see, therefore, why we should bother our heads with making provision for the New Party with a big name, and a big constitution, as if we are going to lay the foundation of a permanent structure of political organisation, which may claim to be a rival of the National Congress or the 'Shastri—Besant' group of moderate liberals.

If we call our party, the Council Party, our aims, objects and methods for the time being will be perfectly well understood by all they may concern. I believe also that strenuous work by the New Party for the next six or seven months will enable it to materially influence the coming Council elections. We shall be able at least to send the voters to the poll in much larger numbers than on the last occasion. We may also be able to send our own men into the Councils. But that will materially depend upon the local conditions in each province. Thus the party may succeed in winning the elections in the U P and Bengal. The Berars have already done it, and both the G P s may probably follow suit. The Andhra, the Karnatak, Behar, and a part of Madras may be taken as almost hopeless in this matter. The fortunes will thus differ in different provinces. But what is possible within the space of one year of up-hill work, will have been done, and the Congress will have been convinced

that time has come for reconsidering the situation

Regarding the constitution of the New Party I venture to think that we can do very well without a hidebound constitution and hard and fast rules. I almost shudder to think of the time that would be wasted in prolonged and yet barren discussions about every syllable of every word of the rules we may frame their logical connection among themselves, also what the rules possibly may or may not mean to a lynx-eyed critic or even to some of the fastidious members within the party itself. I have no hesitation in openly confessing and loudly proclaiming the disgust which has accumulated in my mind during the last few years about the methods we follow in our Committee meetings whether they be deliberative like the All India Congress Committee or simply executive like the Working Committee. And I refuse personally to spend one single moment hereafter in discussing whether the 'T's in the constitution and rules of the New Party are properly dashed or the I's are dotted pointedly enough.

For myself the small statement in about ten sentences, which was drafted on the spot at the first meeting of the New Party and to which we have put our signatures is quite enough for the purpose of expressing our aims and objects. It is also quite enough for me to know that the New Party, is an almost ascertained group of Congressmen who being dissatisfied with the several resolutions of the Gayr Congress, have agreed to work in concert and harmony to bring about certain well known changes in the N C O programme, the most prominent among them being the capture of the Legislative Councils in the interests of the country.

In Mr. Das we have a spirited president of the New Party who is endowed with a keen political instinct whose past record of personal sacrifice is above all criticism and cavil.

and whose emergence from the jail after an almost self-imposed imprisonment, is a guarantee that he will represent a pleasant blend of idealism and practical common sense in politics.

Nor can one wish for any better secretaries of the New Party than we have got at present. In Pandit Motilal Nehru we have secured an office-bearer, who is not only an ex president of the Congress, but one who had condescended to work as secretary of that body, being in charge of the working organisation of the Congress above two years. Mr. Patel's resourcefulness and his power of initiation are unquestioned. And in the Mahomedan gentleman, who has agreed to serve as a secretary of the New Party, we have got a fair sample of representative Mahomedan opinion.

It remains, therefore, for the New Party only to do one thing, viz., to give these office-bearers free latitude for work, to strengthen their hands by making useful suggestions from time to time and to carry out in the different provinces the work of ramifications and the general building-up of the organisation. It would be enough to help them if we do not clog their wheels by raising, from the very beginning, inconvenient questions of forms and formalities and procedure and divert their attention from the useful and necessary work of preparation.

But in return I would also ask the President and his office-bearers not to complicate or compromise the position of the members of the New Party by making off hand pronouncements of policy which would materially depart from the principles agreed to at the first party meeting at Gaya. What we all stand for, in the matter of the changes in the N. C. O. programme, has been made abundantly clear during the last few months, and if we stick to the comprehensive position made up of the views of the different sections of the



party, we shall be both more useful and powerful. I would plead definitely for a more or less loose affiliation of the different groups of the party, both in respect of its constitution and their propaganda.

For, while we all stand for a *pro-change* programme, we feel that the conditions materially differ in the different provinces, and I would strenuously avoid and even oppose red tapism and hide-bound uniformity, because that is just the thing that would destroy the freedom of growth and nourishment so very necessary in the initial stages. We shall be, I think, playing just our opponent's game, if we shall profess to be able to crystallise our principles or positions in a short cut and dried formula. Our opponents would like nothing better than representing our programme as a patchwork of all possible hues and colours, or a veritable mosaic of political views. But the charge need not upset us. For our opponents themselves are precisely in the same position:

The no-change party also is a perfect mosaic. For in the first place Non-co-operation itself is supposed to be of two kinds. Satyagrahic and non-Satyagrahic. There are those who understand N. C. O. in the sense of resistance to Government, though peaceful, but there are others who do stand on the no man's land between resistance and co-operation. One kind of N. C. O.s believe in loving the enemy, and another in loving no one so well as themselves. Non-violence again, is merely compulsory or enforced to the mind of one class among them but voluntary to that of another. One accepts it as a policy, another as a principle. Nor are they all equally pledged to the Ahmedabad pledge. One class would openly hug the Moderates and the Mahomedans to their bosom another class would just hold back one shoulder in the fraternal embrace. To one the Khaddar is Swarajya, to another, it is only a patriotic-economic doc-

trine One looks upon imprisonment as *summum bonum*, another only as an ornamental embroidery to political life. And the distinctions could be carried to infinity

With this fly in their own ointment, the no-change wallas have no right to point their finger at or twit us with the difference in the shades of our pro-change programme The range or variety between Responsive Co-operation and breaking the Councils is certainly not wider than that in the different positions of the no change N C O s above indicated When it comes to voting in the Congress the voting is done on party lines The main idea is to defeat the opponent, Thus among those who voted against the boycott of British goods resolution there were many who had always favoured and advocated the boycott *Per Contra* among those who voted for Mr Shrinivasa Aiyengar's Sin Fein amendment there were those who favoured Responsive Co-operation as well as those who wanted to break the Councils

Let us not therefore be waylaid by catch questions as to our policy Just as they are all no-change N C O s and no more, so let us all be pro-change men or Council men and no more The real issue for us to turn the bad corner obstructed by the anti Council-wallas Being on the high road towards Councils whether we simply win the elections and plug the door of the Councils, or actually enter them and obstruct, is another matter, and certainly not a concern of our opponents There would be some propriety in making our positions clearer if there was a chance of some one among them forming the basis of a compromise That hope is gone and let us all follow our own tastes and preach our own views, remembering always of course that we are all Council wallas The rainbow is one and indivisible though there are seven distinct colours in it.

## 'WALK INTO MY PARLOUR,' EH ? \*

The proceedings of the meeting of the New Party at Bombay last week were pretty satisfactory. It was more or less an informal affair, and the meeting was attended by a comparatively small number of people. But only those who were co-opted for the purpose of discussing preliminary drafts were required to attend the meeting. And even some of these probably spared themselves the trouble to go to Bombay, in view of the meeting of the general body to be held at Allahabad only a few weeks hence. The meeting, however even such as it was was fairly representative. And the proceedings showed that there were more points of agreement than disagreement among those that were in charge of certain drafts which are to be placed before the Allahabad meeting. No doubt trouble did not fail to come from certain expected quarters, but it was supposed to be made only to strengthen the strategic position of the New Party in relation to at least the wobblers among the whole-hog N C O's.

The critics of both Mr Das and myself seem to be suffering from an excruciating anxiety. They are evidently concerned to see these two protagonists of the New Party on the point of losing their identity. What else but amusement can I derive from this loss though I am neither a cynic nor a misanthrope? The truth of the matter is that really no loss of identity is involved in the positions which have been taken by Mr Das and myself. Both of us I am sure feel that we are just where we have been all long neither closer nor more distant. That is why I could proclaim at Calcutta my readiness to stand or fall with Mr Das. The

success or failure of the New Party will not depend upon whether Mr. Das or myself occupies a more correct position in relation to each other, but whether both of us together and in the aggregate do not impress the country as more rational and acceptable than the extreme Non-Co-operators, who, like the veiled Prophet of Khorasan, entered the inaccessible region of mysticism at Gaya more than even Mahatma Gandhi did

Between myself and Deshbandhu Das we have never felt any loss of identity. We have understood each other correctly. We have never ignored the shades of colour that distinguish his political opinions from mine. I have always admired his vigour of expression and his tendency towards emotionalism. On the other hand, Mr. Das has never underrated the need for matter-of fact politics for which I am always inclined to stand. But we have never felt that by reason of this difference in our tendencies we stood in the least danger of being confounded either with the blind chelas of the Mahatma or with the selfish group of moderate politicians. We always knew that both of us wore the same label for the last sixteen years, and the formation of the New Party will only serve to clinch that common label upon us more tightly than before.

Both of us had never any misgivings as to what each of us may do for the other when it comes to defeat a common enemy or opponent. Even appreciating the mutual need for freedom of individual opinion and its expression, we know how to make common cause and to take the greatest common measure of our position, in order to offer the broadest front that we together can to a common enemy. The more so now, when we are convinced that the pains that our opponents are taking at present to magnify the shades of our individual opinions are due to their desire to secure

their own purpose. And their purpose is to frighten the people by presenting the position of the pro-Council people as a hopelessly divided position and consequently an impossible position. But there would be some meaning in their pretence of being confused by our different positions if they could say that they approved and would accept *any one* of those positions though they might reject all the rest on that account. But if they do *not* accept *any* of those positions I fail to see how it can become their legitimate business to show up our differences. It should be enough for them to say that their way does not lie even an inch in the direction of the Councils. It would simply be impertinent for them to investigate the problem as to which among the parallel loop lines of the pro-Council railway will take the pro-change party quicker to the destination.

It is for that reason that I regard the invitation of the *Bombay Chronicle* and critics of his ilk to make my position clearer with distrust and suspicion. And I believe that Deshbandhu Das also does the same. It is the wicked invitation of the spider to the fly to come into my parlour. But our critics may rest assured that we are not likely to be so lightly taken in. My one reply to this kind of invitation would be on the one hand to lift with my left hand the veil over the confusion of kaleidoscopic positions occupied by the different groups of the no-change party itself and to lift my right hand in token of a warning to my critics that their attempts to differentiate our positions will only end in making Mr. Das and myself all the more anxious to close our ranks and to cover up the little rift if any between our positions by offering a common front through a common formula. The manifesto of the New Party which may be accepted at Allahabad will I think shape and embody this common formula.

Nor is this without a parallel. Was not Lokmanya Tilak in favour of Responsive Co-operation and Deshbandhu Das in favour of a policy of almost pure obstruction at Amritsar? And yet did they not find a common formula in the form of a Congress resolution to comfortably accommodate both of them, and to effectively oppose both Mahatma Gandhi and Mrs Besant? Spiteful critics of Lokmanya Tilak were characterising him as moderate for his use of the word 'co operation', Mrs Besant regarded the word 'responsive' as bad English in relation to co-operation and also prognostic of the trouble which Tilak meant to cause in the Councils. Mahatma Gandhi again objected to the words 'disappointing reforms' on the ground that they discounted in advance from the zest with which *he* wanted the people to co operate with Government in the Councils, and the speech, which Mr Das made in moving that resolution marked him out as an obstructionist or an extremist. And yet just as blood is thicker than water, so also real nationalist political sentiment is thicker than phraseology. And there was no difficulty in knowing who is who at Amritsar.

Das and Tilak were found to be indissolubly on the same side from the beginning. Later on Mahatma Gandhi gave up his psychological objections and coming over joined Das and Tilak in a compromise. The trio naturally proved invincible, and Mrs Besant was alone singled out with a handful of her followers as the advocates of undiluted co operation. So also even to-day Mr Das and Mr Tilak's followers are again found on the same side. They are again as far away from real co-operation as they were in 1919 and if Mahatmajī were present amongst us or even accessible enough to D B Das and Pandit Nahru he would have made it up with them, and given his consent at least to a permissive if not mandatory, resolution in favour of Councils. It

is a pity however that his followers have taken the Council-boycott even more seriously than Mahatma Gandhi himself, and have shown far less inclination to make a compromise and preserve the unity of the Congress

I therefore repeat that I am not to be put out by being called an advocate of Responsive Co-operation, for it really means, as it meant three years ago, obstruction in the Councils to the fullest degree or measure necessary for the purpose of a speedy achievement of full responsible Self-Government. Nor can I be frightened by Mr Das speaking exclusively in terms of deadlocks and breakdowns. For in the main he and I mean one common policy of contesting elections, capturing the seats, entering the Councils, taking the oath, trying to secure a majority, presenting well formulated demands to Government, offering them co-operation in the event of their granting most of them, and in case of their failure to do so, to use the seats in the Councils for nothing but continuous and consistent obstruction to Government in such manner as the New Party may determine, or the Congress may advise, at the proper time, supposing the Congress could be persuaded to enter into our spirit and accept our view. In the meanwhile Mr Das and myself will go on pushing the cause and the propaganda of the New Party with the same freedom and the same agreement that we now claim and possess. Further, we shall both strenuously resist the forceful as well as the wily attempts of our opponents to separate us, claiming that the grammar of assent which may apply to our differences of views in the New Party, shall not be different from the grammar by which the position of the different groups in the no-change party must also be judged.

## C.R. DAS IN POONA.

## MR. N. C. KELKAR'S SPEECH.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,—This morning I had the privilege of welcoming Mr. C R. Das on behalf of the Poona Municipality. Our Municipality is a thoroughly representative body; and so the welcome given by it was really the welcome given by the whole City-population itself. The welcome I have now the honour to give, in these cherished grounds of the Shivaji Mandir, is again a welcome given by the townsmen of Poona, but in addition to it a welcome also by the people of Maharashtra, as represented in the Provincial Congress Committee, and the Tilak Swarajya Sangh.

And I know Mr Das will like that welcome, because he bears a close kinship to both these bodies in one way or another. As President of the National Congress he is legitimately, if not legally, connected with the Provincial Congress Committee, and as for the Tilak Swarajya Sangh, Mr Das was and is a valued member of the Bengal Branch of that body, which demanded Self-Determination for India even before the National Congress.

Ladies and Gentlemen, Mr Das needs no introduction to you at my hands. In fact it would be impertinent on my part to attempt it, when you have already welcomed him so royally and done him all the honours of a distinguished guest. But even then, I believe, you will like me to say one or two words about him, just because man often likes nothing better than to hear an echo of his own voice and his own sentiments. And don't you recognise *your* own voice and sentiments when I say that in Mr. Das, you have for the moment, an all India leader who can be relied upon



for finding a way out of the present political imbroglio and restoring the lost unity to the nation ?

In thinking of Mr Das we have to think of both the man and his mission. As for the man Mr Das I think you all know the progress of his career. In his early days he was a dreamy youth who loved the Muse and made a mark as a poet and a writer in the Bengali language. Later on, he turned his attention to law as a profession and politics as an occupation of the heart. And while in politics he soon proved himself to be the power behind the throne of Young Bengal, he achieved in the field of law such triumphs and earned such emoluments as fall rarely to the lot of the members of the Bar. But Mr Das excelled *himself* as well as others when he gave up such a lucrative profession and accepted what may be called the beggar's bowl for the sake of his country.

In Mr Das Mahatma Gandhi has certainly found an apt pupil and faithful follower in point at least of self sacrifice though probably not in point of pouring organised abuse and censure on the head of the legal profession itself. I hold no brief for the lawyer before this Forum but I may take this occasion to express my gratification at the act of bare justice which Mr C. Rajagopalachariar and other members of the C. D. E. Committee did when in their report they recommended that the All India Congress Committee should make the *amende honourable* to the deserving lawyer class which in the past has furnished the back bone of public life in this country.

Well Gentlemen having said thus much about Mr Das the man let me say one word about the man's mission. And in this respect you will all recognise that important as the man is by himself the mission is even more important than the man in this case. It is well known that Mr Das

has resigned the continuative office of the President of the Congress and has accepted the modest leadership of a new party within the Congress. He has also expressed his determination to fight for suitable changes in the Non-co operation programme until the minority in the Congress becomes a majority. Gentlemen it is not for me to say anything on the merits of the side Mr Das occupies in the present controversy. You can form your own judgment in the matter as Mr Das also can take care of himself via a vis his critics. But the critics have done *me* also the honour of mentioning me in the case and I would conclude with saying just one word upon that point.

You know perhaps that the *Chronicle* has been recently extremely troubled to find that though I am an ally of Mr Das my position and his in relation to the Councils is not the same. The *Chronicle* has been shedding crocodile tears over the loss of our identity. But don't you think that the anxiety of the *Chronicle* is a little bit suspicious? For what is it really to the *Chronicle* whether my friend Das and I agree or disagree if the *Chronicle* cannot agree both with Mr Das and myself? It is certainly interesting the knowledge I mean of the mathematical minima of psychological differences which separate Mr Das from myself. But it would be far more interesting to me to know if the *Chronicle* agrees at least with Mr Das if it cannot agree with myself. In the absence of such agreement or at any rate the desire to arrive at such agreement the unpaid and unsolicited illumination supplied by the *Chronicle* must be regarded as sinister and must also therefore be rejected.

The difference between Mr Das's position and mine may perhaps be as big as that between tweedledum and tweedledee, but both of us are I think shrewd enough to perceive the real object of our critics in magnifying that dif

ference, and we shall therefore simply refuse the kind invitation to walk into their analytical parlour. I think Mr Das and I have always been of one mind, and I may at once proclaim to all who pretend to care about our identity, that we shall stand shoulder to shoulder in foul weather as we have done in fair weather before. But I believe the fair weather region has now once more been reached. The cause he and I have espoused is a just cause and a reasonable cause, and you will presently hear from Mr Das himself how far he agrees and how far he disagrees with me in the present controversy. Gentlemen, I now ask you to give Mr Das your attention as you have already given to him your heart's affection.

### CONGRESS-MANDATE IN DANGER \*

It is extremely regrettable that the no-change party should force the issue of the Congress mandate on the country. I have absolutely no doubt as to the consequences of such a reckless policy. The mandate theory has already received numerous wounds and shocks during the last two years owing to the Congress taking upon itself the responsibility of ordering or advising the country to do or not to do certain things. And time had indeed arrived when the leaders of the Congress should have cried halt in the progress of this damaging process. But they are only accentuating the error. They are staking the reputation of the Congress for sanity and also the respect which the people entertain for the Congress in running their pet fad or hobby horse to death. Never was the perversity of the N C O mind

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\*Maharatta, 18th Feb 1923

demonstrated more than at the Gaya Congress when the experience of the country during the last two years was thrown to the winds and a series of mandatory recommendations and prohibitions was promulgated again, in spite of the report of the C. D. E. Committee.

I am aware that three years ago the question of a mandate first came before the public in a form in which it had never come before. But it had then come under obviously intelligible conditions. The Reforms bill was in the making, and it was necessary to fix and formulate the demand of the Congress for a minimum of reforms as the first substantial instalment of Self-government for the country. It was a stage of negotiations with the Parliament; and we know that in all negotiations the negotiating agents have got to be definitely instructed as to what they should put forward as the formal demand of the high contracting party. The argument on the other side, as advanced by Mrs. Besant and others, was that the Congress deputation and other agents authorised by the Congress, should have elbow-room or latitude enough to do what they might think best under the circumstances in the course of negotiations. But the very fact, that there was not one single authorised person responsible for the negotiations, made it necessary that no such latitude should be given, so that a plethora of proposals should be made impossible and the Congress demand should not be enlarged or whittled down according to the length of each negotiator's foot.

Quite different is the form which the latter mandates of the Congress have taken. They profess to regulate the future conduct of the nation and of every man in the nation according to the foot-rule of the extreme N. C. O. programme. Thus the nation is to boycott schools, law courts, the legislative councils, the local self-governing

bodies to take up Khaddar to the exclusion of even Swadeshi mill-cloth to accept non violence as an eternal principle of conduct and to make the life and comfort of the foreigner safe and secure in this country. These mandates go much farther than and are also different in spirit from the mandate involved in the restriction put upon the Congress deputation and others in the matter of proclaiming the Congress demand for Self Government.

Supposing that the demand was not granted by the Parliament no discredit would have attached to the Congress. But quite different is the case of the mandates above indicated which seek to divert the whole stream of political and public life in the country into uninvestigated channels and which impose definite obligations of conduct upon every Congressman on pain of discredit, or the forfeiture of his loyalty to the Congress. The Congress mandate of three years ago in so far as it was a mandate was directed against a definite number of its authorised agents who were asked to do a simple thing namely, not to depart from the terms of a particular demand deliberately formulated by the Congress as a statement of its immediate aspirations or a basis of negotiations on its behalf. The scope of the mandate its period of duration and the duty arising out of the mandate were strictly limited. It introduced no new radical method of political activity. It put forward no new theory of the relations between Government and the people. And it made no intrusion or inroad upon the private opinions of men and women in this country in respect of their religion or ethics and worldly or economic life.

Not so the new fangled mandates. In every syllable they offer an uncompromising challenge not only to vested interests but cherished judgments and beliefs over the whole length of the private and public life of Congressmen. They

leave the people no alternative but to flout and discredit the authority of the Congress if they want to follow or vindicate their own conscience or judgment in a variety of matters. Mr. Rajagopalachariar and his immediate henchmen knew very well at Gya that they were flogging a dead horse when they set about re-affirming the boycott of schools and law courts. They knew that the country did not take kindly to these boycotts even ever since Mahatma got the Congress to enact them. They knew that not even five per cent of those who were assembled in the Congress before them at Gya had ever honestly attempted to boycott the law courts at any rate. They also knew perhaps that there were not even five individuals in the whole Congress who had accepted the boycott of law-courts in the true spirit in which it was recommended by the Congress. They knew further that though a certain number of boys had left schools and colleges and that a certain number of parents and guardians had shown their readiness for the sacrifice of the interests of their children in this respect the boycott as a movement had failed and that all the Government and aided educational institutions were as prosperous as before. And yet they re-affirmed the principle of the boycott—nay, even pretended to maintain it in practice as if it was already in force to any appreciable extent! And the worst of it was that they pretended to feel strong in the majority vote of those people who were manifestly false to themselves and to the Congress.

The boycott of Councils is perhaps more easy of practice and the mandate in that respect may show greater compliance to its credit. For after all what does a Congressman lose if he wastes his vote? The occasion comes only once in three years. In ordinary times or even when elections are keenly contested a considerable portion of the voters cannot

go to the poll or prove themselves too indifferent or indolent to go there. They can therefore easily make a Congress-virtue out of a temperamental defect by abstaining from exercising their vote. Not having learnt to appreciate the effect of constitutional obstruction within the Councils, they care not as to who occupy the seats within those bodies, and their ignorance or cynicism naturally passes for political sagacity. But the Non-co-operators of this kind are at once found out when the turn comes for their compliance with the mandate about the boycott of schools and law-courts. Here one touch of immediate and acute individual self interest unmasks their real mentality.

The roaring Non-co-operators become at once bleating co-operators betraying their helplessness and the thin veneer of their self-sacrificing spirit. They make it manifest that in their opinion it is lighter sport to ruin one Council constituency than to ruin the prospects of one young boy or girl. They make it manifest that in their opinion the finances of the country may be more light heartedly surrendered than a petty personal interest of their own. It is thus that we have at present amongst us a whole host of Congressmen who raise their hands in affected horror when any one pleads for Council-entry, and bring under prompt requisition all the subtleties of casuistry in explaining away their own non-observance of the Congress mandate against schools and law courts. It is this shame-faced inconsistency of conduct which has been both the puzzle and the despair of all serious minded Congressmen in the country. And it is this interested blowing hot and cold with the Congress mandates that is driving the men of the New Party to take the bull by the horns and to explode the theory of the Congress mandate with one desperate effort if only to bring round the thoughtless N. C. O.s to their right senses.

I believe the New Party will make it a point to resolve at Allahabad to put up candidates at the next ensuing Council elections That would apparently be going against the mandate of the Congress But the violation of the mandate would certainly not be grosser in this case than in the case of those, who resort to the law courts and make use of the allied official agencies, or those who send their children to government or aided schools and colleges There is certainly no reason why the breaking of the mandate against Council elections should be invested with greater political odium or grosser religious sinfulness than in the case of the other two boycotts On the contrary it is possible to effectively prove individual unselfishness in breaking the Council mandate It is nothing but selfishness that impels the violation of the other two mandates But one can unselfishly vote at the elections if he is not a candidate himself or votes for a candidate in whom he is not personally interested I find it nothing so easy as to rebut the charge of selfishness brought against me by my opponents, in the matter of my advocacy of Council entry For I can at once remove all cause for cavil and contention by assuring my opponents that I shall not be a candidate for the Council elections myself To the charge of supporting men who will not be above temptation of office or official patronage or who will not possess the necessary strength to offer uniform and effective obstruction, I can reply by saying, 'Put forward the stoutest, sternest and the most unselfish among your Non-co-operators and I will gladly support him in preference to the candidate of my party' But if he cannot accept the offer, he will be no longer entitled to blame me for supporting another candidate of my choice

I am prepared to put this argument of selfishness and temptation at least, to the severest test possible If, how-



ever, my opponent would nimbly shift the ground give up the argument of selfishness and temptation, and simply take his stand on the super righteous position that it is sinfulness and pollution to touch the Councils, then I will gladly give him the go-by and say to him ' Well my friend let us agree to differ I am content to be not the kind of saint that you are I do believe in forcing the hands of Government through majority votes, and obstruction in the Councils by a minority as an important part, if only a part of the programme of National activity , and I will break the Congress mandate in perfect good faith and hear no more nonsense about the boycott of Councils. The Congress will have to thank itself if it seeks to perpetuate this absurd and suicidal prohibition against Council-entry. Thus game of playing with the mandates of the Congress and paralysing the country instead of Government can no longer be tolerated

## THE RATTLING OF THE KALAM COMPROMISE.\*

The rattling of the Gandhi-message did its work at Gya, and the rattling of the Kalam-Compromise has taken its place. Both are intended and also calculated to put an impediment in the path of those who, having seen the futility of the triple boycott, are now thinking of introducing suitable changes in the N. C. O. programme. The rattling of the Gandhi-message won the majority vote in the Congress session; the rattling of the Kalam-Compromise is expected to stem the tide of waverers who were otherwise sure to join the New Party. The imprisonment of Mahatma Gandhi served as a suitable ground for reverberative noise among the no-change-wallas in the Congress pandal. The plausibility of the Kalam-Compromise is now doing the same service to the no-change N. C. O.s outside.

But what after all does this much-talked of compromise amount to? The terms of the compromise are no terms, for they are obviously all one-sided. There is absolutely no consideration coupled with these proposals, which may weigh with the New Party in any way. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad has given a master-stroke of plausibility to his proposals, by resigning his seat on the Working Committee of the Congress, in the good name of detachment and impartiality. But that should not be allowed to work as a red herring across the straight path of the New Party, which decided at Gya to organise itself for the important mission of turning the face of the Congress movement in the proper direction. I do not mean to say that the Maulana himself does not believe that, in the negotiations he has opened with both parties in such praiseworthy spirit, he is not serving

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\* *Mahratta*, 25th. Feb. 1923.

the cause of the country I give him the fullest credit for the desire to bring about the needed reapproachment between the two wings of the Congress. But I shall simply refuse to accept his *bona fides* as even a part, much less the whole, of the inherent merits of the proposals he has put forward.

The main feature of the compromise proposals is the decision to be arrived at by the Congress at a special session at the end of three or four months. But I confess it has no attraction for me. It is like the design of a stupendous structure without the provision of a concrete foundation. It is a proposal resting on an aerial pivot. Have I not seen what happened at the Gya Congress? Can I not have an idea as to what may happen at a special session? The habit of wasting time and money in the Conferences and the Congresses has of late grown to such proportions that one may now as lightly think of a special session of the Congress as ordering a cup of tea or coffee at a restaurant. I need not go into the details of expenditure involved in a special session of the Congress to all concerned or take into account the serious dis-location it causes in the necessary routine business of Congressmen. But here I have my eye chiefly on the unfruitful character of a special session. I wonder what we shall do in that session if we have not previously arrived at some reasonable understanding between the leaders of the different parties.

The character of the Subjects Committee which will cater for the special session, as well as the character of the delegates who will sit down to the feast of deliberation therein, is certainly not going to be changed, during the next three months. Under the operation of the Congress constitution the assembly at the session will be the same in point of spirit and mentality as we had at Gya. Did not they amply convince us at Gya that these Bourbons of Non-co-opera-

tion can learn nothing and forget nothing, whatever their real experiences of a life of practical politics during the last two years? I can well imagine band master C R standing up in the forum of the special Congress, and not only swaying the emotions of the audience with the waving magic wand of Mahatmaji in his hand, but being even outdone by them in point of sentimental obedience to the real or supposed mandate of the N C O high Pontiff. Are we to have a special session for once more recording the mathematical truth that public opinion in the country is not now a whole integer and that the fraction of one third is less than two thirds? I think I can admit this mathematical truism without wasting my time and money upon a journey to the special Congress, and may use it for an effort to make the smaller fraction grow into a bigger one.

I lay stress upon the want of an essential previous understanding among the leaders of both the parties as forecasting a fruitless special session for the simple reason that the identical question was raised at the Calcutta meeting of the A I C C in November last and was disposed of by C R and his men in a fashion which led us to despair of a compromise at Gya. There is nothing new in my opinion in the naive proposal of the suspension of polemical hostilities for a definite period, say up to April 1923, the preparations for a renewed battle with Government in the meanwhile and the recommencement thereafter of hostilities among Congressmen themselves to decide the issue of a proper method for carrying out the N C O programme. The truce could have been easily agreed to, if it could be forecasted to any extent as to what may be called a success or failure in a renewed campaign of Civil Disobedience, and what would be definitely done by C R and his men, even when a failure had to be admitted.

The pro-change party had demanded at Calcutta a simple undertaking from them that, in such an event, which may be likely, or unlikely, the no-change party would simply withdraw its objections to Council-entry. No further compromising terms were suggested nor was the surrender of personal liberty to take or not to take any part in the Council movement demanded. But the reply then was that only the Constructive Programme was the common ground between the two parties as if the Council-entry was a matter of mere selfishness or individual aggrandisement on the part of the pro-change party. The demand for the removal of objections to a particular N C O programme without in any way cutting at any other part of it, was surely passive or negative enough to reconcile all manner of prejudices and to accommodate all manner of consciousness. But that was refused. Nay, the refusal was further aggravated with acerbity by treating even the unanimous recommendations of the C D E Committee as a scrap of waste paper, so that C R was prepared to condemn even himself to spite the pro-change party. When I saw C R standing up in the forum at Gya to move resolutions after resolutions which were in their implication a vote of censure upon the C D E Committee I wondered whether he was not literally pillorying himself as a miserable victim of unreason egged on or wire-pulled by a spirit of revenge.

With this experience behind me I can very well imagine what a special session will be for me, and personally I shall refuse to stake anything upon the decision of a special session unless I have the word of honour, of men whom I can name on the other side as responsible for the happenings at Gya. I have no objection to try another experiment with Civil Disobedience if all the evidence before the C D E Committee is to be ignored and I am prepared with my men

to take my proper place in this movement, provided we are enlisted as volunteers without any pledge, and provided also that there is to be a definite understanding beforehand as to the conditions of the process and the test or judgment of its success or failure, coupled with a distinct understanding that the objections to the Council-movement will be withdrawn, at least by a non-committal resolution permissive to those that may like to take up the Council-campaign as well as to those that may like to remain aloof from it on the sole ground of conscience. I know, however, that C.R. and his men will not agree to any understanding of this nature, and for that very reason I too must refuse to agree to any compromise like the one proposed by Maulana Abul Kalam. For the same reason I am glad that whatever the party meeting at Allahabad may decide in its collective wisdom about acceptance or refusal of the compromise, the party at any rate has been formally constituted, and we discuss the matter in the coming A I C C as a new entity in the Congress.

on that day that an accused under judgment could be really superior to the judge himself. The bloom on Mr Bloomfield's face had faded. A hectic pallor had taken its place. Neither the natural correctness of conduct nor the consciousness of prestige could keep off the creeping nervousness from him. For once in his official life a Civilian English Sessions Judge nodded respectful salutation to a native in the dock before he himself took his seat on the Bench. For once were the judicial words of a penal sentence belied by the tributary words of human admiration. "Would I not rather sit at your feet and learn a little of your nobility than send you to jail for six years?"—words like these might easily have come from the inner lips of Mr Bloomfield when he stole a parting glimpse of Mahatma Gandhi.

The apologetic Advocate General obviously felt quite out of his element in conducting that State-trial. There was no tangled skein of a secret plot which his skill should unravel in the opening address. He felt the mockery of leading evidence where every thing was avowed and admitted. He winced at reading the articles charged, as every word in them was a bold indictment of the Government he represented, and left some unanswerable reproach sticking to the reader's soul, in spite of his assumed professional scornful manner. He regretfully missed the contentious opposition which he delights to meet in the Law Court every day, as it provides good sport for the keen file of his intellect or legal acumen. For once perhaps did Mr Advocate-general also feel that the fat fees he would charge were simply wasted on him.

And what shall I say of the accused himself? Clad only in a Khadi enlargement of the proverbial fig leaf, there was Mahatma Gandhi with submission to none and yet with good-will to all, the grand accused whom it was Mr Bloom

field's rare privilege to try and judge. When he was brought from the jail to the court house his guard looked more like an escort of honour. With his nimble feet he stepped into the court room and with one universal smile he at once shed a halo of the holy spirit of the blessed Passive Resister upon the whole assembly from which even his prosecutors could not extricate themselves. But I doubt whether they really did not like to share in that glory. The accused was not only supremely serene but looked even festively joyful to a degree. Was it his trial or his own bridal ceremony? But he was even more jealous of his happiness than a bridegroom in that he had not even a single best man by his side. No Counsel in robes or without robes appeared for him. He was himself his own Counsel. And paradoxical as it may seem also his own accuser. He needed no file of witnesses, no tomes of law books, and no encumbering paraphernalia of authorities. A single type-written sheet contained the whole of his defence, the greater part of it however being devoted rather to a justification and an aggravation of the offence than a defence in any shape or form.

Did he plead guilty to the charge? Yes by all means. He was only eager that the great categorical question be put that he might answer it away like a shot. For once in his life Mr. Advocate-General realised that his task of prosecution could be a thankful task and the convicting judge that he could be complimented upon leniency *vis à vis* a penal sentence of six years imprisonment.

Mahatma Gandhi thus succeeded in completely subduing all the latent or patent dramatic elements in the great State-trial by simply reversing the familiar points of view in the affair. And like a skillful railway pointsman he shunted the train of the trial from the track of vulgar terror to that



of refined sublimity. The hidden surprise upon, and the consequent humiliation of, the Prosecutor and the Judge might have turned the noble drama into a farce, if there were not elements of grandeur in it too pronounced to be turned into ridicule.

Great as were the efforts made by Mahatma Gandhi to keep the trial free from feeling, the judge could not help giving it an emotional touch when he mentioned the name of Tilak in passing the sentence and trying to justify its severity by a precedent. And then Mahatmajī too could not help striking the sympathetic chord and declaring that he only felt honoured by the parallel cited. Swiftly did the memories of another great State-trial of fourteen years ago rush into the mind of every one present, and the judge proved an unconscious wizard so to convert the dead past into the living present by one key-word. There must be surely some magic charm in a sentence of six years' imprisonment that it should be regarded by Government as an effective amulet for the salvation of India, and two heroes like these—Tilak and Gandhi—should accept it as such in terms and spirit. Yes by common consent imprisonment of six years for men like these could certainly do much to cure India of its present maladies!

I wonder if Mr. Bloomfield did not leave the Court with a secret feeling of self-reproach. Mr. Advocate-General was happier for not being elevated to the Bench, for he could actually shake hands with the accused, and thus earn the needed atonement for even such small animus as might remain to his debit, after the remarkably fair and even gentle treatment he had given to the Mahatma and his co-accused. And the Police Officers in attendance for once felt completely floored. Their usual fussy business of looking after a convict this day was gone. They need not hurry him out,

and they would not have done it even if they could. With the disappearance of the judge and the Advocate-General from the Court room the assembly was turned into a social gathering the Police being simply ignored.

And then commenced the re-enactment of a scene with which I had been familiar for about a couple of years before. There was Mahatmajī sitting in the centre with a *melee* of men, women and children engrossed in talking to Mahatmajī and being talked to by him in return with all the welcome, because enjoyable interventions of wit, wisdom and repartee. I heard Mahatmajī affectionately chaffing a young dandy of five years on wearing a suit of foreign cloth and a fashionable neck tie. He mildly reproached an old title-hunter advising him to get rid of his habit at least at that ripe age. By silent inspiration of courage he arrested the tears before they could moisten and in his opinion tarnish the eyes of some affectionate follower here and to another there more stern and practical he would give a useful hint for further strenuous work allotted to him. The ladies felt caressed by his blessings and the men felt they got a gift of strength by shaking his supple but saintly hands.

In half an hour the grand levee was over. One by one the gathering in the Court house was dissolved. And even when the police escorted Mahatmajī back in the ominous motor van of the jail we all felt the trail yet vividly remaining behind of a spirit of rare devotion and self-sacrifice which could not be suppressed by the proceedings of the State-trial for the moment or even by the threatened absence of the hero figuring in them for six long weary years.

Four years ago when I first read the prospectus of the Sityagraha Ashram founded by Mahatma Gandhi the one word in it which attracted my attention most was the pledge of fearlessness prescribed for its inmates by this disciple of

Gopal Krishna Gokhale That I said must be the really more salient feature in the political design of this Ashram than the drastic code of puritanism that served as an adorning embroidery And as I left the premises of the improvised Court house I said to myself 'Verily has this pledge been fulfilled' Mahatmajī had by his personal example that day cast a true type of fearlessness which neither long time nor short memories can ever efface

### THE SPECIAL CONGRESS SESSION \*

The whirligig of time is supposed to be a bye-word for unexpected changes In the history of the Congress during the last three years however it has ushered in nothing but an endless succession of infructuous meetings and conferences The Congress was given a constitution in order to turn out a maximum amount of work with a minimum expenditure of time energy and money But as a matter of fact it has been put to quite an opposite use. The constitution has served only as a handle for needlessly multiplying gatherings of Congressmen from all parts of India, and prolonging deliberations which lead to nothing From the business point of view the Congress armed with a constitution has done much worse than the old Congress without it And the irony of the situation cannot be so much felt by others as by those who have helped in the framing of the constitution picturing as they did at the time to their mind the sharp and swift movements which the Congress would make when she was given some definite clear cut rules and regulations for work

The position bad as it is has been made only worse by the addition of an extra-constitutional entity—I mean

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\**Mahratta* 9th Sept 1923

private conferences. As if the deliberations of the Congress session which now last over the greater part of a week a continuous session of more than two or three days of the Subjects Committee with mid night continuations in between them and repeated meetings of the A I C C throughout the year were not sufficient to worry and disgust the average Congressman enough a new gathering has been invented called a private conference of all parties. That again is a matter of one or two days. So that taking a concrete case one may count with a busy time of it at Delhi from the 11th to about 20th of September in the name of a special session of the Congress! On the other hand I have not calculated a period after the 20th though I foresee a meeting of the A I C C immediately after the end of the Special Session! A Congress session now a-days has become like a long-drawn grammatical sentence by a punctilious grammarian who must put therein a prefix a suffix, an adjective and an adverb in addition to the noun substantive and the verb of course. And the irony is naturally complete when in the end the sentence is proved to be meaningless.

This characterisation of the Special Session at Delhi may perhaps be put down by some critics to my own impatience and shortness of temper. But given the patience of Job the courtesy and cheerfulness of Mahatma Gandhi the punctilious attention to details of Rajagopalacharya and the capacity for ubiquitous mental engrossment of Mrs Naidu, I really fail to see what is going to be achieved by the coming Special Session with all its appendices fore and aft by way of a settlement of the vexed question that has captured the attention of the whole country for the present.

Let us first take the private conference. It is quite a plausible name but I do not remember a single private con-

ference in the later history of the Congress which has helped the solution of any difficult question. In olden days as moderates and extremists we were as sharply distinguished as the pro-changers and no-changers of these days, but then settlements by private conversations were more hopeful or better productive of understandings. In our present-day private conferences the democratic idea has been run to death and the possibility of a successful result of private deliberation has been injuriously overcome by the mere mass of people who are present at the so-called conference with or without invitations. In theory a solemn confidential conclave a private conference now-a-days is in fact an epitomy of a public meeting if not a farcical fair. And the deliberations thereat are practically public property. The differences of opinion again have latterly so crystallised into personalities that a free exchange of views, at any rate a sincere desire for mutual accommodation has almost disappeared. Moreover, these conferences instead of paving the way for settlement have succeeded on some occasions, in misleading the open meetings of the A I C C owing to the natural sense of irresponsibility appertaining to private conferences.

The A I C C will meet as a Subjects Committee for two days on the 13th and 14th. But does any one really expect that it will at the end of its deliberations offer a unanimous lead to the Congress Session? The bad blood exhibited in the private conference will continue to flow more profusely in the A I C C. And the decisions if any will be arrived at by the mere operation of the vulgar law of majorities and minorities. So far as one can see the real point at issue lies in a small compass. Will the Congress be advised to uphold the Bombay Resolution of compromise and *laissez faire* or clinch and accentuate once more the boy-

cott resolution of the Gya Congress? But you would be much mistaken if you expect that the narrow proportions of the issue will be appreciated the laws of relevance will be observed and strict discipline will be enforced or the discussion would be kept within the proper channel. On the other hand I definitely expect that the floodgates of loose talk and even recrimination would be opened and the whole Bible of Non co-operation from Genesis to Resurrection would be read and debated upon and all obviously to no purpose. There is not a single member of the A I C C who will come prepared for a change of his views on the spot or for mutual accommodation. The idea of saving the reputation of the Congress at the cost of the sacrifice of personal opinion has been dead long since. In my opinion the Gya Session was the psychological moment for the non-changers to stem the centrifugal tide of revolt. The report of the Civil Disobedience Enquiry Committee had really offered a common platform for all parties within the Congress but all hope was lost and irrevocably when instead of taking the Congress out of the rut of an impracticable programme attempts were made only to dredge it out deeper. The open formation of the Swarajya Party at Gya was a complete answer to the Gya resolutions and the country should have been given the rest it deserved from mutual recrimination and the needed elbow room should have been taken unto themselves by the two parties for silently carrying on their separate work with a view to take the sense of the country once more at the annual session of the Congress as usual. The *locus penultimus* if any was available till the pro-changers were driven to form a separate party though within the Congress. We were all till then one common fold. We all bore one common label. We were members of a joint family and co-partners in the political property of the Coi

gress How handsome it would have been then to save the honour of the family by a timely display of good will and a spirit of accommodation As it is, the Swarajya Party may indeed be called a rebel child but the no-changers on their part cannot also escape the ignominy of being a perverse parent And who is there to judge between the two and apportion the blame between them? The Government whatever it may do or it may not do in view of and in relation to the split in the Congress is not a judge but only a common enemy whose one purpose is to carve out the utmost tactical advantage that it can out of it Our differences have clearly been their opportunity, and the situation will grow worse for us and better for them if the spirit of compromise will not prevail, and the Bombay Resolution at least, which is practically a neutral pronouncement and does not injure the fundamental principles of any party, is not affirmed again But rather than take the risk of upsetting the convenient position which was fortunately arrived at in Bombay and could well have been deemed a second life given to the reputation of the Congress after Gya it would have been more helpful not to have thought at all of a special Session The position even from the point of view of the no-changers would not have been worse than at Gya, for there was no mandate of Council-entry in the Bombay Resolution which alone could be regarded as an unselfrespectful antithesis of the Gya resolution. The Bombay Resolution had a back to it big enough to accommodate both the pro-changer and the no-changer and to vindicate, if he could, the usefulness of his policy in a spirit of friendly emulation As it is, it would be ringing the death knell of the Congress if the Bombay Resolution is upset and the Gya resolution is reinstated; and it would not be much better even if the Bombay Resolution were

to be re-affirmed unless of course it were re-affirmed unanimously. Of that however I see not the least chance. And the best course, therefore, for the Swarajya Party at any rate would have been to give the complete go-bye to the Special Session.

In the Special Session itself things would not be carried further than in the Subjects Committee much less improved upon. There would be if I could picture the situation correctly on the first day nothing but unmeaning formalities and a very very long address by the President in which the commonplaces of Hindu Muslim unity, the N C O movement in general and the eternal verities about Unity would be dwelt upon in a supremely learned discourse without any definite guidance however towards the solution of the real problem. On the second day there would be rumours of another effort at a compromise and probably no business done till at a late hour and even then some speeches would be made upon the resolution about congratulations to Turkey. The rumours of compromise would prove baseless and the day would be simply wasted. Next day there would be some trouble owing to the fussiness of the aggressive exponents of both the Hindu and the Mahomedan communities in the Congress and the bonafide Congress work would be given the go-bye in the efforts of the patent peace makers who would have a grand opportunity to display their counter fussiness and their eloquence. Perhaps an emergency meeting of the Subjects Committee would be called on the third day and would very probably end in nothing except affirming the *status quo*. On that day the main resolution would be moved and seconded by ten speakers and notices would be given of amendments to be moved in the open house. The fourth day would be taken up by the moving of these



amendments and speeches upon them, and as the voting would have to be done by count the meeting would be 'adjourned till to morrow' The voting would take place on the fifth day and the count would as usual be as one to two And so after the the worry and the pather for over a week commencing from the 11th inst, the Congress would be exactly where it was, and public opinion in the country along with it before this gratuitous phenomenal waste of energy and money

Anticipating all this the Swarajya Party voted against the resolution of a special session at Nagpur. And for the same reason the Swarajya Party may as well be absent from the Congress Messrs Das and Nehru, however, seemed to be persuaded later on that even now there was some hope of reasonableness somehow dawning upon the no-change party and they informed the men of the party that they may attend the Congress But the task is not so easy Every member of the Maharashtra party feels that going to Delhi is a useless quest, and I doubt whether many delegates belonging to this party would care to attend the Congress Certainly no efforts would be spared to give the leaders of the Swarajya Party the strength and support they have called for But I cannot pretend that those who go, would be going with any heart in them for the conclusion is foregone There is nothing in the situation that takes the position of the Swarajya Party any further apart from or in relation to the Congress than it was at Gya after the Gya Congress The party is pledged to go on with the special work which it has assigned to itself, and it shall go on with that work If, independently of the Swarajya Party and in their own wisdom the no-changers agree to the Bombay Resolution, it is well, but if not, well also, if not so well, The decision of the Delhi Congress, however adverse, shall

not move the Swarajya Party from its will and purpose even *so much* as by an hair's breadth. The Delhi Congress may have some incidental surprises in store, but the weakening of the Swarajya Party's policy and programme shall certainly be not among them. The Maharashtra party can be quite content to plough a lonely furrow, for it has already and shall have also in future in a more abundant measure the blessedness of the knowledge that it is in Indian politics the little leaven that leaveneth the whole loaf.

## THE SPECIAL CONGRESS SESSION \*

### II

My forecast about the Special Congress Session at Delhi has for the most part come true. The only thing in respect of which it failed is the passing of the compromise resolution without an actual division of the house. In other matters I have proved, I claim, a true prophet. The Congress Session with its prefixes and suffixes did last from the 11th to the 20th. The informal conference proved abortive as I expected, and though the *legitimate political business* of the Special Congress was only the question of Council-entry, and though Mr. Das insisted upon giving that question due precedence the whole of the time of the Conference was taken up by the consideration of Hindu Moslem unity. The All India Congress Committee wasted one whole day, or I may even say, two days, over the Bengal delegates dispute. So that, at the end of four days and after the two addresses on the first day of the Congress were over, the agenda for the next sitting was an absolute blank sheet of

paper. Even when the Subjects Committee actually began its work, its business had often to be brushed aside for the discussion of the elusive communal unity and a still more hazy idea of a national pact. As usual most of the Subjects Committee's drafts are redolent of the mid night oil.

The announced time-table of the Session was every day wrong by about two hours, and no body seemed to care for the poor delegates who had crossed the distance of hundreds of miles for the Session, but had to go about sight seeing in the city for want of any business to do. For the purposes of speeches, I mean their length, relevancy, or parliamentary sense, the Congress went on as if there was no one in the chair. The right of moving amendments in the open house was unduly exercised and the capacity of the delegates for causing confusion was limited only by their own lack of initiative. In short, the Special Session quite fitted in with the series of mismanaged Congresses which have come into vogue during the last two years. A Committee has now been appointed to recast the constitution of the Congress. But it remains to be seen whether it will take into its purview these patent short-comings, and try to remedy them.

As it is attendance at the Congress has become a by word for a tedious task and a wanton waste. The total number of delegates at Delhi was within two thousand. This was the least number on record for many a year. And the irony lies in the fact that a war had been waged for getting the Special Session, and the issue before it had convulsed the whole country and taken public life out by its roots as it were. I wish Mr. Rajagopalachariar, who moved heaven and earth to obtain the Special Session, will now have ample time in his self imposed retirement to consider how far his insistence on that demand was justified. The unwisdom of his policy

has even been punished in that the Delhi resolution, far from re-establishing the Gya resolution of Council boycott has only widened the scope of the compromise as passed at Bombay. By the time the Coconada Congress meets the interest in the Congress will I am afraid, automatically decrease owing to the elimination of the Council entry issue. And there is a further chance of its decrease if, under the inspiration and the guidance of the latest factotum of Mahatma Gandhi any new fire-eating schemes of Civil Disobedience are sanctioned and launched by the All India Congress Committee.

The compromise resolutions at Delhi cannot be said to be quite unexpected. Of course there was an element of uncertainty about it but everything had been latterly gravitating towards that end. To begin with the centre party which first came in evidence at Bombay was gradually gaining strength. The cleavage between these two wings of the No-change party was going deeper and deeper every day. The Punjab and U P were being steadily reclaimed. Even more notable was the spirit of change creeping over Sind. The Behar leader was unchangeable but the opposition in that province had visibly raised its head. In Bengal the tenacity and tactics of Deshbandhu Das were well rewarded and the tables were neatly turned upon the No-change Provincial Congress Committee. It appeared as if Mr Das after a temporary loss of leadership, had come back to his own. And in Bengal when it rains it pours.

In the C P Hindustani N C O leadership was practically extinct. In the C P Maharashtra, Shet Jamnalal, with his army of workers, had kept the fire alive, and the Satyagraha movement, so skilfully devised to over-shadow the local Swarajya Party had brought a real crisis upon the Nagpur leaders. But the dauntlessness of Dr Moonje and

the fury of Mr. Abhyankar, combined with the inherent flaws in the constitution of the Nagpur P C C helped the Swarajya Party to be constitutionally predominant in that body. Gujerath and Karnatak alone were adamant, thanks however to the loyalty of the followers of Mr. Vallabhbhai and Mr. Deshpande. In Maharashtra district after district was gradually coming to its senses, and the bold stand of the Deccan Swarajya Party, that they would follow their own course without any attention to what the Delhi Congress may decree, had more than made up for its want of proper representation within the P C C.

The Andhra had sprung a surprise upon Mr. Rajagopalachariar since the Bombay meeting of the A I C C and Mr. Prakasam, who at Calcutta and Gya appeared to be even a greater inspirer of, than co-operator with, Mr. Rajagopalachariar had now turned a critic. The No-change-Siamese twins were separated. And this perhaps was the unkindest cut of all. In the Tamil Nadu Dr. Varadarajulu had taken a vow to oppose Mr. Rajagopalachariar. But if he retained any following it was only in his own province. Not a single paper throughout India supported, with anything like a real gusto, the re-affirmation of the Council boycott at the Special Session. Even the *Bombay Chronicle* had changed the angle of its guns from the Maharashtra to Southern India. Immediately after the Nagpur resolution the Bombay P C C under the inspiration of Mrs. Naidu and Mr. Desai took up an attitude of *non-possimus* towards the Special Session arrangements at Bombay. And though Delhi came forward to befriend the wandering Jew of the Session, Mr. Asaf Ali's visit to Mr. Das imported a definitely sinister significance. In spite of all this, however, no one could positively say how things would end at Delhi. But the debacle was destined to de-

velop swiftly Mr Rajagopalachariar declared he was not attending the Special Session Mr Das had completely won the delegates' elections in Bengal all along the line And last but not least M Mahomed Ali himself the last hope and stay of the No-change party, accepted the inevitable and consented to a compromise, though not until the Swarajya Party leaders were driven, after protracted negotiations, to issue a statement defiant in spirit, though in terms leaving the solution of the problem on the knees of the Congress gods

The change in the No-changers seemed to be contagious, and leader after leader of that party began to show an awakening to the situation which demanded unity at all costs as an alternative to the final break up of the Congress And I say this in no cavilling spirit I recognise that they had at last allowed their judgment to get the better of their pet convictions. And to them I give the credit for the compromise, for I am sure that their followers were ready to vote with them if the Gya resolutions were to be repeated The way in which these leaders, however, got themselves dis-entangled from their old moorings was hardly fair to Mahomed Ali It appeared he alone was the bad boy responsible for saying the last word which decided this question of compromise Mahomed Ali could not have found it pleasant to be told again that *he* alone was responsible for what was to happen Their open reminders of his responsibility sounded an inner tocsin of an anticipated failure, and somewhat marred their homage and allegiance to him as the new accepted leader. Curiously enough, Mrs. Naidu saw and disliked all this, and in the open house *she* had the chivalry to assure Mahomed Ali that he had in her a sharer in that responsibility. Mahomed Ali's own shoulders were of course broad enough

for his burden but the help of an angel is never to be disdained

Speaking for Mahomed Ali himself I think he showed a boldness worthy of a leader in accepting the responsibility for a compromise though he must have secretly discerned that the other leaders too had made up their mind for a compromise but wanted a willing scapegoat which they found in him. The cat of an absentee leader's opinion may usually jump in any direction after his restoration and it must have been calculated that much would be excused to Mahomed Ali if this the latest arrival from jail would give the judgment in favour of a compromise. And again as the chosen disciple of Mahatmaji would he not be entitled to clum and say he had got a mysterious wireless message from his Master if that spiritual element alone was wanting to bless the change in the situation and make it holy? And after all Mahomed Ali did well to decide the matter in the way he did.

I sincerely sympathise with him and appreciate his decisive action. Only I have to find fault with the manner in which he acquitted himself in placing his resolution of compromise before the Subjects Committee as well as the open house. He was recommending a compromise in the interest of unity and harmony. But his speeches on both the occasions betrayed a bitterness of spirit which could easily kill the unity before it was born. He carried the expression of his antipathy to Council-entry to an unexpected degree. His speeches were nasty in intent and gross if not actually vulgar in their diction. To compare Council-entry with eating the swine's flesh or licking the spittle was not worthy of Mahomed Ali's own culture, not to speak of the self respect of those at whom these fine phrases were aimed. His reference to the Chitpavan Brahmans of Poona was

simply impudent. He had no business to refer to any class of Congressmen by race. It only shows that his freedom from racial hatred or his vaunted inter-communal brotherhood is only skin-deep. His whole behaviour seemed derogatory to the image of his maker. And I may warn Mahomed Ali in a friendly spirit that he should in future weigh his words more carefully, for his temper and his language are both an ideal preparation for disgusting his followers into revolt against him at any moment.

A word now about what is to follow the Delhi resolution of compromise. Its one clear result will be to give a decisive lead to the wavering bulk of both Congressmen and Non-Congressmen. And when they now throw their weight into the scale the rout of the No-changers is bound to be complete. It was this third party, this great non-vocal group, who seemed to swell the body of the No-change-dogma. It will now spread by its private whispers a general pro-Council entry-atmosphere in the country. As for the Katter No-change group. Mr Varadachari of the Tamil Nadu has no doubt set up an imitation of a rebel party, supposed to be the prototype of the Swarajya Party formed at Gaya. But it is doomed to remain an imitation in all things except the success of the Swarajya Party. 'Willing to wound but afraid to strike' would be the motto to be written generally under the no-change groups in other provinces. They would like to curse Council-entry, but would lack the spiritual explosive which alone could blast the programme of Council-entry. A third section, not quite negligible in numbers, is likely to change its spirit, thus vindicating completely the loyalty to the Congress which alone had animated their opposition before. This therefore, in my opinion, is an apt psychological moment for sincere peace-makers on both sides to restore to the coun-



try the greater part, if not the whole, of the unity which had, for a long time, disappeared from this land. India is now sick of dissensions. Mutual recrimination has entirely turned the soil upside down, so that we could say there is at this moment no name, even among the foremost ranks of leaders which has retained anything of the old halo of respect about it. And Government alone have benefitted by this destructive ploughing of the soil. Here at any rate, however, we may stop, take a new start in public life, and write upon the clean slate before us nothing that will disfigure it. It is never too late to mend.

### SWARAJYA PARTY, COUNCILS AND CONGRESS.\*

The Council elections throughout the country are now over. The country has given an unmistakable judgment upon the main issue between the no-changers and the pro-changers. The issue, however, must be clearly stated in order to counteract the confusion caused unconsciously, and in some cases also consciously by the no-changers. The issue is not what the Councils will achieve as now re-inforced by the members of the Swarajya Party displacing an equal number of Moderates and other undesirables, but it is whether the country was in favour of Council entry or Council-boycott. The other issue can be decided only at the end of the coming three years. What has now been put beyond doubt is that the country does not favour Council-boycott but favours Council-entry for all it may be worth.

The question arises as to what is meant by the country. It is obvious that the country in this case means the Council

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\* *Mahratta*, 23rd. Dec. 1923.

Voters in the country. The non voter world is quite beside the point in this matter. It is true that the total number of voters in India does not at present exceed 60 lacs and this certainly bears a very small ratio to the total population of the country. But it must also be remembered that there is no other recognised method of ascertaining public opinion in this matter. The question can only be how many from among the voters have voted not how many among the non voter world favour or disfavour Council-entry.

I have seen an ingenuous argument put forward by some critics that the whole non voter world must be presumed to be against Council-entry because they have not voted at the elections. But the fallacy is obvious. If this argument be valid all the have-nots in the world may be argued to be *against* the things they want to have because *as a matter of fact* they have *not* got them. The wise and the wealthy are few in this world are we therefore to suppose that the remaining portion of humanity is opposed to having wealth or wisdom? In India a much larger portion of the population have not railways within their reach. Are we therefore to suppose that they are against the extension of railways where they do not exist or against the use of railways where they actually exist? In England even at this moment the non voters are more than the voters. Shall we therefore say that the English people are against any system of representative institutions?

The only valid way of reasoning would be that a majority of voters have not voted at the polls but only a minority has. But even here we must take into account the fact that it is only owing to physical or pecuniary reasons and not owing to a want of will that most non voting voters do not go to the polls. And this thing happens even in countries where there is no question of boycott of Councils or

Parliaments Judging by the polling figures afforded by the last elections, we can legitimately say that the bulk of the people as represented by the voters have expressed their approval of the use of Councils, also that this expression would be only more numerical in proportion as the franchise would be extended and a larger number of non-voting people would be brought into the fold of the voters

The figures of those who have voted are useful for another kind of argument pertinent to this issue The roll of Congress-membership in India is manifestly a parallel measure of ascertaining representative public opinion in this country. And I may, therefore, very well ask, is the list of Congress-membership as numerically strong as the list of Council-voters? I may go one step further and ask, is the list of Congress-members in India even as strong as the number of the voters who have actually voted at the polls, not to speak of the total list of voters? I think I may give a few instances. In the Dharwar District more than ten thousand individual voters went to the poll Will any one among the no-changers tell me what the total Congress-membership in the Dharwar District is? The same may be said of the six Districts of Gujerath and seven Districts of Maharashtra in which respectively my friend Mr Jamnadas Mehta and myself secured about 9½ thousand votes in the Assembly elections In the face of these facts it is only irrational and pig-headed obstinacy that can deny the verdict of the Indian public in favour of Council entry

The next questions are, what attitude the Swarajya Party will adopt in the higher and lower Councils, and what the Party will be able to achieve as the result of its attitude in regard to the attainment of Swarajya I do not wish to indulge in profitless speculation in reply to the second question For this depends upon many variable factors But

as regards the first question I may speak with greater certainty and if we could show that the policy to be adopted is the right one then the Party could not be responsible for the ultimate result. The Party will have done its duty and the rest would be in this as in other cases on the knees of the gods. The policy of the Party, therefore, would alone be in point. And this has been outlined in a fairly precise manner by the Party in manifestoes signed by its responsible office bearers from time to time.

The first cardinal point in that policy is that though the Party men in the Councils would not scruple to take the prescribed oath they shall not accept any office that is to say, any official place of honour or emolument. That at once settles the question of co-operation with Government in its most pointed form. Fortunately for the Party, an opportunity arose immediately after the elections in Bengal when Mr Das could prove to the hilt the baselessness of the charge that the Swarajya Party men are self-seeking co-operators. Whether Lord Lytton meant it as a *sinister dodge* or as a *straight constitutional practice* the fact remains that he did offer the charge of the transferred departments in Bengal to Mr Das that is to say the ministers to be nominated by him. And the fact also remains that Mr Das did refuse the offer. That the offer was not repeated in other provinces is beside the point though one may be absolutely sure that the offer would have been dealt with in exactly the same manner by any of his lieutenants or co-adjutors in any other province.

Nor could Mr Das have done otherwise than he has done being so shrewd as he is. The offer by Lord Lytton was a clear proof that the Bengal Government was shaken in its *morale* or prestige merely by the advent of the Swarajya group in the Bengal Council. Here was a band of Council

lors, bound by the pledge they had signed, to vote like one man according to the mandate of the party leader upon questions which may test the confidence of the Council in the Ministers. Thus band fairly paired the Government men in the Council bound to vote as the leader of the Council may command. And in case a portion of the independent members joined hands with the Swarajya Party for its own purpose Government would be repeatedly defeated. But in case Mr Das asked his men to accept ministries they would be precisely in the same predicament. And on occasions even worse. On the other hand if the Diarchy then worked unsatisfactorily, as it is bound to do under present conditions the blame would lie on Swarajyists. They would thus be humiliated without advancing their cause in any way. No doubt the Diarchy must be proved to be untenable but that must be while responsibility would rest with Government themselves. Government must be hoist with their own petard.

Mr Das, however, showed an astuteness equal to the occasion. He turned the dilemma neatly upon Lord Lytton himself. No doubt the Swarajyists were pledged not to accept office. But that was a matter as between them and their voters. Why should Mr Das plead his inability to take up office on this extraneous ground so far as Lord Lytton was concerned? To him therefore he spoke with the pretence of one free to accept office. He followed up that pretence by actually calling a party meeting, and seriously discussing the proposal. The meeting naturally decided that they could not possibly take up office under the present conditions. They proposed some conditions in return. Diarchy had, by common consent, proved a failure. If Provincial Autonomy were granted recommended that is to say, by the Bengal Government, then that would be a

fair challenge and should be accepted. But even Provincial Autonomy could not have a fair start so long as political prisoners were not set at liberty. They had a share in the struggle for freedom and they must be free to enjoy the fruits of that struggle. And in making this condition Mr. Das in fact anticipated the American critic who has found fault with taking up office so long as Mahatma Gandhi was in jail. The result of all these negotiations was only as might be expected. Lord Lytton was free to appoint other ministers of his choice, and the Swarajysts were free to carry on their war against repression and diarchy.

The policy of the Swarajya Party can be summed up in one word 'obstruction'. In fact they do nothing else. At the same time this they can do with great effect. In point of the numerical strength of the Swarajya Party members in Council we have at one end Madras where it is the smallest and at the other end we have Central Provinces where it is the largest. In between the two come the remaining provinces with varying ratios of Swarajysts to the total strength of the Councils. It is obvious therefore that one uniform policy could not possibly be laid down for all the provinces. Much must be left to the discretion of the local leaders so that there may be an apparent variation in the practice of fighting the bureaucracy. But the fundamental principle would be the same in all the provinces.

In Madras the fiery Satyamurti could not do anything better than go on dashing his head against the stone wall of the combined officials and non-Brahmins as he can hardly ever get a majority on his side. On the other hand in Nagpur my friend Dr. Moonje can reasonably hope with a solid party at his back to begin his very first innings with a defeat for Government paradoxical though it may sound. Here the Governor can indulge in the process of certifica-

tion to his heart's content and Dr. Moonje too could say that though the last word in the Government of the province may not rest with him, he will have proved the present system of diarchy to be as worthless as a sucked orange. In other provinces, however, the problem would be how to woo the independent section of the Council and to win it over to help to form a working majority.

The problem is somewhat difficult for the Swarajya Party is wedded to obstruction and the average independent member favours co-operation. Their common meeting ground therefore would be in those matters in which the independent member has some programme of his own which government may not accept and for that reason the member would come in conflict with Government. The sure chance of the Swarajya Party would be in these matters when it can patronise the independent member by its support and achieve its own purpose of defeating Government. The task of the Swarajya Party leader in most of the provinces would indeed be very exhilarating, being neither so hopeless as in Madras nor so hopeful as in Nagpur. It would therefore call forth all the qualities of leadership and statesmanship of which he may be capable. As against the solid phalanx of the official and nominated members the solid phalanx of the Swarajya Party would, in the case of most of the provinces, achieve an easy victory. But before the Swarajyist can reach and attack Government at close quarters he has to pass through the quagmire of the independents among whom he can never be sure as to which spot will yield under his foot and envelop him and which would be the real *terra firma*. The only plan, therefore, for the Swarajya party in the majority of the Councils would be to act very much like the Irish party in the House of Commons which, while not exposing its constructive genius

to the ignominy of defeat would keep its ranks always well drilled and disciplined ready at a moment's notice to make common cause with any section of the independents in a fight which may offer a hope of defeating Government. The Swarajya Party may thus look like *Lathials* or *Gardies* but without the odium attaching to that name, for in no sense would they be mercenaries. Their purpose would be allowed to be a higher one as their hire would be only an opportunity to defeat Government.

My critics may say that I am unduly harping upon this expression viz. defeat of Government. But it should be remembered that defeating Government creating dead locks and driving government to certification is a necessary stage through which we have unhappily to pass. It is a time-honoured well recognised and well understood method of fight in representative bodies in which governments are made and unmade by the sheer result of the vote in the House. The occasion is one for proving the powers of numerical strength and no far seeing leader will disdain this odious task or unduly regret that he has to hide the lamp of his constructive genius under the bushel of parliamentary tactics. In fact the conditions of the challenge to his constructive genius are unfair in the extreme. He could not afford to leave the choice of the ground the weapons and the seconds in this duel wholly to Government. The public eye would be fixed merely on the spectacular effect of the fight and not on its merits. And the Swarajya Party leader in every Council must for the present be content to show that he too understands the art of effect.

Now in these circumstances what is the Coconada Congress going to do? Will it continue the *status quo* and its own benevolent neutrality? Or will it besides affirming the meaningless and ineffective triple boycott as an ideal,



also dissociate itself aggressively from the Councils that is to say, its own men in the Councils, as a practical measure towards that ideal? If I may judge by the strength of forces arrayed on the opposite sides, I am sure Mr Rajgopalachariar will lose the contest. Messrs Drs Nehru Ajmal Khan, Ansari, the Maharashtra leaders Sarojini Naidu, Lalaji, Prakasam, and last but not least, the Ali brothers are all for maintaining the Delhi resolution. Mr Patel, with his usual inscrutable ways has raised the cry of a positive mandate from the Congress in regard to the work in the Councils, and a demand for the Congress directly taking up the reins of the team of the Congresswallas in the Councils in its own hand. But to that none of the leading Swarajyists will, I think ever agree. Perhaps Mr. Patel may have raised this false alarm only to scare Rajgopalachariar and his party, as a step in just the opposite direction, with no deeper intent than securing a momentum to his resistance to the fire-eating non-co-operators. The fight is thus not even equally balanced. But the resolutions of the Congress are becoming more and more an uncertain factor and we shall simply wait and see what happens.

But of this I may warn Mr Rajagopalachariar that in case he succeeds in getting the Congress to adopt a resolution of active dissociation from the Councils, he will be only driving the wedge of disunion deeper into the body of the Congress, and making that national body look more ridiculous than ever before. No country in the world with any experience of or aspiration for a democratic representative government will understand, much less appreciate, the threatened attitude of the Congress towards the Legislative Councils, which never stopped running by reason of the old boycott, and have happily been reinforced by the Swa-

rajyist members as the result of the last elections. A renewed boycott even under the new conditions will be an enigma even to men like De Valera and Zaglul Pasha who though never content to accept the Parliamentary fight as the last word in the national struggle, have nevertheless not scrupled to take the fullest advantage of their Parliaments. In India where we have not yet advanced up to the degree of revolutionary preparation which was reached either in Ireland or Egypt the boycott of Councils would not only be ignored but even resented. Thus boycott would of course go the way the other two boycotts have done and the Swa rajya Party would be pushing on its self imposed task merely as if the Congress did not exist for this purpose. But the good will and co-operation of the various sections of the Congressmen so essential for the work of the Constructive Programme, will have disappeared and the Congress shorn of the prestige and power born of union, will remain not like the enthusing banner that rallies the national fighters but like a dismal looking and woe-begone scarecrow.

## MUZAFARNAGAR DISTRICT CONFERENCE.\*

ADDRESS DELIVERED BY MR N C KELKAR ON THE  
23rd INST AT MUZAFARNAGAR AS PRESIDENT OF  
THE DISTRICT POLITICAL CONFERENCE (THIS WAS  
TRANSLATED AND READ IN HINDI)

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

Two weeks ago when my friend Dr Ansari came and asked me to preside over this Conference I was agreeably surprised. But I gave my consent readily because in this Conference I saw an opportunity to make many new acquaintances among my countrymen of the north. I had visited Delhi itself many times before but had no occasion to go into the interior of this Province. I thank you therefore not only for the honour you have done me by inviting me to preside over this political gathering, but enabling me to extend the range of my fellowship. And you will take this Hindi address from me as an earnest of my resolve to cultivate your friendship and as a token of my respect for your culture. We even in the south wish God speed to the Hindi as a national language for the whole of India.

Gentlemen, I cannot begin this address without at once touching upon an event which has gladdened the heart of the whole country. It is the release of Mahatma Gandhi. For nearly two years not a day passed without millions and millions of our countrymen thinking of Yerawada, where Mahatmajī was imprisoned. There he lay, expiating, in the opinion of Government, the sin of sedition. But in reality he was only adding to the momentum of his Tapasya which must fructify in India's welfare. It was a kind of a yoga—sadhana on his part, and yoga sadhana if pursued without

any selfish purpose, must, according to our Hindu ideas unfailingly produce righteous results. Mahatmaji said he regretted his release. For it is his first conviction that salvation comes through suffering. But we cannot soar as high as he and so we can only rejoice in his release.

It is evident that Mahatmaji will use the next few weeks of his convalescence in thinking out the problems of the country. But while he is doing it like a silent warder on the lull let us go on like the worldly and busy ants with our own work as it comes handy from day to day. Even when the great soul of the Mahatma does his work unseen of looking after the destinies of the world the world itself must go on spinning around and the little souls in it must justify their existence and fulfil their purpose by doing things according to their lights and their free will though within a predestined sphere. That is why we go on holding conferences like this taking counsel together and turning the next sod in this rocky ground of public life and political agitation to get the next foot hold in the direction of progress.

I am told that your own district has taken its due share in the great movement of the past three years and has passed through the same phases of thought as some other parts of the country have done. In response to the national call four of your district pleaders had suspended their practice but resumed it soon after the Bardoli decision. A fair number of students and teachers walked out of the government or aided institutions and national schools were started for them. The students have I am told now resumed their studies and the National Schools were finally closed for want of funds nearly five months ago. The teachers however, I am glad to hear are still faithfully adhering to the boycott policy and have not cared to seek re-employment in any government or aided institutions. There has been a similar

fluctuation I am told, in the results of Non co-operation activities in other departments also You had collected in your district 16 thousand rupees for the Tilak Swarajya Fund and enrolled six thousand members on the register of your Congress Committees But there is now a decline in that activity The boycott on foreign cloth and liquor showed for some time very hopeful results but it now gives decreasing returns The Hindus and Mahomedans in your district are not indeed living in armed camps but their relations, I am told are not so cordial and friendly as they were in the beginning of this movement and last but not the least your people I am told have begun to discard Khadi and reverting to foreign cloth to satisfy their fine tastes though the district is specially noted for producing good Khadi

This certainly is a tale of sorrow for reaction in political life leads to prostration But optimistic as we all are we must look rather to the great and ambitious efforts we were capable of than to the fact of this inevitable reaction Setbacks and reactions are not necessarily inconsistent with progress Even when the tide is flowing in waves after waves seem to break on the shore and dissolve into confusion and wreckage But the silent observer knows that when the tide is flowing in each wave, though it ultimately breaks marks an advanced and yet more advanced line on the sands than its predecessor In the same manner though the departmental activities in the Non co-operation movement have individually received a setback for the time, they surely reached a further stage than ever before And the spirit of the movement has, on the whole, gained an accession of power to the popular elbow

But just as water if blocked in one direction succeeds in finding some outlet in other directions, so has the energy of the nation found a channel in the Council propaganda.

The experience of your own district only corroborates the experience of other parts of the country in this matter. When we all went in for the Council boycott three years ago we succeeded in it to a great extent. Only twelve per cent of the voters in your district then went to the poll. This year, however, thanks to the efforts of the Swarajya Party after the Delhi Special Congress nearly 60 per cent of the voters went to the poll and returned nationalist candidates to the councils. The local Swarajyst Committee I am told nominated ten candidates for the Hindu and Muslim seats and the fact that they were all successful, testifies only to the solidarity of the public opinion of your district in favour of Council entry.

You must have noted that Mahatmaji in his message to Moulana Mahamad Ali withheld his judgment on the question of Council entry though of course he has generally stated that the triple boycott continues to remain his ideal as before. The ideal is certainly a noble one. If one could only actually and effectively work the triple boycott so as to turn the school house, the court house and the house of the legislature into so many deserted places where naught but the grass grows and the worm treads we could fairly set the political revolution in motion. But the ideal is practically unattainable at any rate under the present conditions of the country. In the meanwhile we must look to the practical instruments that come handy for political work.

Personally I think Mahatmaji will be persuaded eventually to bless the Delhi resolution and the *de facto* entry of Congressmen into the Councils as *de jure* or valid even from the point of view of the Non-co operation policy of the Congress. Mahatmaji could not but take into account the great deflection in popular opinion as represented by the present attitude of some of his own illustrious colleagues

who were the solid pillars of the Non co-operation movement when it was originally started I mean patriots like Hakim Ajmal Khan Lala Lajpat Rai Pandit Motilal Nehru, and Mr C R Das I have mentioned only those who have actively favoured the Council entry propaganda But there are a host of others who betrayed a slow and silent change in their convictions by favouring the Delhi Congress resolution which spells not only toleration but an admission that in politics there can be two or even more ways to go to work.

The Council party has never given up the policy of Non-co-operation in the larger sense viz, the sense of resistance to Government in every possible sphere and at every point of contact in order to bring them to terms They have expressed their loyal adhesion to the old policy of Swadeshi as now accentuated and emphasised by the Khaddar movement They can yield to no no-changer in their theoretical support and actual practice of the removal of untouchability and the uplift of the depressed classes They are as much interested and prepared for sacrifices to secure Hindu Moslem unity as any no-changer can be And as to the policy of non violence there has never been a question as to the Councilwallas favouring it as much as the no-changer That accounts for the items of the Constructive Programme And the average Council propagandist will be found to carry it into practice fully as much as the average no changer

What the Council party however desires is that over and above the Constructive Programme the people should be taught and prepared to put their thumb and their foot upon the very nerve centre which enables the British Government to dominate over this land and to live and flourish as an irresponsible administration The man who actually boycotts a law court or school would certainly pull one stone out of the edifice of this foreign Government He would

certainly be our first preference and choice and we shall claim him as a first class Non co operator canonise him in the temple of national fame. But our only contention is that he who cannot boycott the school and the court should not also boycott the Council but make full use of it as a lever pressure which however he will be doing for only a national purpose unlike in the other cases. The merest common sense must conduce to purity of reasoning in this matter.

The actual revolution of power and authority made by Government in favour of the people is only as an ounce to the ton of the aggregate power at present vesting in them. But so also is the production and consumption of Khaddar as to the total volume of foreign cloth imported into India and the mill-cloth produced in this country. And if we can hope to supplant by Khadi the whole of the other cloth why can we not hope similarly to capture the Government by national efforts steadily and progressively put forward. As for Hindu Moslem unity the last of the race of hooligans who disturb the social tranquility and promote violent riots can disappear only with the last of the race of civilians inebriated with power. If you can hope to turn the lions of human passions into the innocent lambs of undiluted saintly patriots why do you despair of developing the average politically minded Indian into a stalwart opponent of Government who may be prepared to sacrifice every human desire at the altar of the country?

The Council propagandist does not preach an exclusive propaganda. He advises no entire substitution but a judicious supplementing of the one by the other. He feels that the Central and the Provincial Legislative Councils are the seats of administrative power and authority and if the paper majorities of elected members given by the Reforms Act of 1919 could be realised and were actuated by a common



policy of even constitutional opposition they would soon be able to exert an immense pressure upon Government and secure Self Government at an early date I know that even apart from the ultimate veto of the Viceroy and the provincial governors and the numerous restraints upon the working of the councils the immediate difficulty in making the councils powerful enough lies in the differences of opinion and interest among the different groups of elected members But you must also remember that the measure of possible unity in the country at large could not be greater than the measure of the unity in the councils themselves

This apparent disunity is however natural and will take some time to disappear But is there no similar disunity to be found among the workers even outside the councils? Surely the All India Congress Committee for the last three or four years was even more disunited than any of the legislative councils Even among Non-co-operators generally there are different schools of thought No two Non co operators precisely agree in their definition of non violence The numerous and intelligent advocates of Hindu Moslem unity though actuated by a common desire and sentiment have not so far been able to produce any common formulæ which could be regarded as conclusive for solving any major or minor problem in that great overshadowing and almost eternal communal quarrel Even on such a subject as the production of Khadi and its propaganda different views have been taken Why should we then wonder if with a Government bent upon ruling on the principle of divide and govern the councils also show lines of cleavage?

But we have only made a beginning this year in working the councils and the results already achieved are not insignificant Every council is now better manned than three

years ago from the point of view of putting up a fight against Government. The popular element is the weakest in Madras and yet the Government has been having its anxious moments even there. At the other end in Nagpur we have an absolute majority of Swarajyists in the Council and the limit to its opposition to the Government would be only that to be set by its own reluctance or prudence. In the Central legislature we have a party of some 45 strong and though it is obviously a minority yet for a single group or unit it is more numerous, more well knit together and therefore more powerful for opposition than any other single group in the Assembly.

I know fully well the limitations which limit the usefulness of work in the Councils. But they are unfortunately the places where laws of the country are made and the revenue and expenditure of the country regulated. It is here that only for a few months in the year the best and the most powerful among our countrymen must stay and exert the utmost pressure upon Government—pressure, I mean, which can be produced by the momentum of the spirit in the country at their back, the force of their own individuality and the magic virtue of the majority vote. The work in the country and the work in the Council must supplement and act and re-act upon each other. It must not be supposed that the Council worker and the general worker belong to two separate castes. They must be regarded as the vital parts of the same machine.

And what I say about the Councils applies also to all other departments of Self government subordinate to the Councils. The government and possession of the water tap in the house is as essential as the control of the head reservoir. It is no use condemning the municipal and local Boards. The fashion to call local Self government as the

Swarajya of the broom must be given up. It is the broom after all that sweeps everything clean and makes the house habitable. In my part of the country there is a proverb which says that the broom is a goddess and should never be touched by the foot. The broom, it is said, is the magic wand of Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth. Let us use this broom well in a figurative sense so as not only to keep our own house and town clean but also use its butt and to knock down the insolent interference of Government

It is only by the actual use of power and authority even in small spheres that we learn the art of government. We must imitate the example of the professional gymnast who may have only once or twice in his life to win the wrestling prize match but towards that end he keeps up his daily practice of gymnasium exercises. These conduce both to help his daily digestion of food, a circulation of blood and to keep him fit for the prize fight whenever that may come. The work of the village panchayat is, in my opinion, fully as well worth doing as the work in the Legislative Assembly or in the Council of State. The same qualities make it a success while the same defects mar its success in both places. For the highest and the lowest the need of training and discipline as well as the value of success is the same.

The idea at one time prevailed that the principle of Non-co-operation required our putting a boycott on the institutions of local self government. But it was a mistake. Mahatma Gandhi himself received addresses of welcome from municipalities even when the campaign of Non-co-operation was in full swing. This he would not have done if local self-government was too unclean to be touched by a Non-co-operator. And this he did even when it was obvious that considering the relations between municipalities and local boards and the Government, a kind of actual co-operation

was inevitable. Fortunately opinion has now changed. Municipalities in Gujerath are now captured by Kattar Non-co-operationists like Mr. Vallabhbhai Patel who still maintain their opposition to Council entry. It is for them therefore to reconcile their attitudes in the two matters, and I mention the fact not to raise a controversy but to vindicate my own position.

The village worker in the plains is as important to the national cause as the exalted legislator on the mountain-top. The village worker must, to start with, be taught self-respect and made an efficient working unit. To that end he must be made to learn the value of public affairs. Further he must be made to feel that their success or failure depends or can be made to depend upon the part and lot he takes in them. He must be taught to realise that the Government is neither a god to be distantly worshipped nor a devil to be kept at arm's length but a thing to be grappled with and grasped in his hand. He must be taught that Government lives like the spider all along the line of the fabric it weaves and therefore is also sensitive to that extent. It is up to the village worker therefore to make Government feel that even he can be self-respectful, assertive and robust in his opposition to Government where opposition may be necessary.

It is only in this way that we can create an army of political workers throughout the country who would man not only the contingent required to fight with Government in the centres of actual fighting but also the thousand and one outposts necessary to face and meet the bureaucratic administration. And when this common spirit and common training and discipline will pervade not only the headquarters but the rank and file of the national army it may be expected to carry out work that may be required of it at any

time. And the same army may serve the duplicate purpose of civil as well as military duty. In peace times you may use it for pushing on the work of the Charkha, the boycott of foreign goods, the spread of national schools and arbitration courts and conciliation boards in communal quarrels and so on and so forth. But when the war-drum is beaten and the bugle is sounded the same army may be ordered to take up the fight of obstruction or civil disobedience.

As I have said the country wants efficient units for its work. That work is not confined to any one sphere nor can it be accomplished by any single man, however great he may be. If your ideal be Self-government then whether you want to achieve it by a bloody or a bloodless revolution the necessities of the case are the same. The struggle will require both industry and sacrifice of at least a minimum measure in every average individual though in the case of leaders a much higher measure is indispensable. And this industry and sacrifice again must be backed up both by political consciousness and a knowledge of the facts of the political situation. This has been latterly helped by two apparently divergent but really convergent forces. I mean the great development of the Congress movement and the development of the legislative councils.

You all are aware that till a few years ago the Congress and in fact the whole political agitation was the affair of a few educated, isolated individuals in the country in whom knowledge of politics and history of other countries produced a patriotic aspiration but whose education itself led them into habits and ways of life that weaned them away from the common society. There was thus a gain but also a corresponding loss to it. But men like the late Lokamanya Tilak and after him Mahatma Gandhi introduced a new philosophy

of politics as well as a new method of putting it into practice. When Lokamanya Tilak said, 'Swarajya is my birth right' he at once broadened the base of political consciousness upto the last limits of the human society in India. And in that broad field again Mahatma Gandhi has begun an intensive cultivation of political spirit by his preaching of the need of Civil Disobedience and a whole code of self-reliant conduct.

The great wisdom of Lokamanya Tilak's aphorism lies in the fact that he by one stroke cut off the claim of the foreigner to rule India on the pretence of racial superiority and elevated the common India to that natural status of humanity of which equality can fairly be claimed by one man against another for certain political purposes. That aphorism embodies the great principle of universal suffrage as well as the great principle of representative and also responsible government. And that theoretical sense of equality was given a concrete form by Mahatma Gandhi when he not only preached but practised his precept by his readiness to wear the coarsest cloth like khadi to eat the coarsest food to do the meanest work of service to mix with the lowest strata of the proletariat and to think and speak the thoughts and the language of the commonest man in society. The face of politics has thus been entirely changed by these two men and it will never turn back.

To you therefore who are assembled in this conference I would say 'Let us enter into the spirit of these two great political teachers and try to accomplish what they expected of us each by our own individual efforts. There is no one here whom God has not given some particular good quality or some particular aptitude which he may put to the public use with advantage. Real public work is so many-sided that every one of us may hope to get a foot hold or a corner

for himself in which he may put forward exertions in his own little measure so that they may add one more brick in the work of nation building. The greatest of our ideal and the voluminousness of effort required to achieve it should only be an incentive to work and not a cause for despair. We do not disdain to trim our household fire because the Sun who is the fountain head of all light and heat cannot be commanded by us. As in private affairs so in public affairs also we must say, patriotic work like charity begins at home. Let us be selfish and intensely selfish if we can, in making our own the whole wealth of patriotism and the comfort of a work-a-day life spent in public service.

## PUBLIC MEETING

An exceptionally crowded meeting was held on the 23rd of July 1924 on the Shivaji Mandir grounds under the presidentship of Mr. N. C. Kelkar. He made the following speech by way of introduction—

### MR. KELKAR'S INTRODUCTORY SPEECH

"LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

We have assembled to-day to listen to an address and a statement by Pandit Motilal Nehru on the subject of the Swarajya Party and the present situation. He needs no introduction to you at my hands. You have already learnt to admire the patriot and respect the gentleman in Panditji. Two years ago your Municipality presented him with a welcome address and yesterday he unveiled the statue of Lok Tilak and laid the corner-stone of the Tilak Memorial Hall. That explains your relations with him established during the last two years. As for his position in the country he is

the *de facto* leader of the Swarajya Party and also the leader of the entire non-official section in the Assembly. Even Independent Nationalists have evinced their admiration for his tactfulness and ability in the work of the Assembly.

In 1921 when the Municipality gave him an address the last sentence in the address which I myself drafted and read was to the effect that India expected Panditji to give correct guidance to the country in the crisis. That correct guidance he eventually gave after deep deliberation and careful observation of the conditions in the country. And he has stuck to that well-considered opinion with very commendable tenacity. One can imagine however the big burden of censure and blame that he has had to carry though on stout and heavy shoulders from his own friends in the No-change party. They can easily forgive a poor Kelkar for his views about Council-entry were notorious all along. But they can and will never forgive him for his change of opinion. But Panditji's reply to them in one sentence has been that consistency in politics is the virtue of an ass or an ass of a virtue whichever way you like to put it.

#### THE SWARAJYA PARTY

Well it was owing to Deshbandhu Das and Panditji, that we could form the Swarajya Party at Gya the very next morning after all the old boycotts were reaffirmed. The policy and the doings of the Party have since then been subjected to a very vigilant scrutiny by its opponents and they have attacked every position we took or developed. Whether we offer Responsive Co-operation and carry out useful measures or throw out the finance bill their critical displeasure is uniform. We have the satisfaction that given an absolute majority as in the C. P. we could make government through the councils impossible as we have declared in our pledge and also that we turned whatever



majority we got to good and useful purpose in the interest of the country. But I join direct issue with our opponents and ask them, what right have they to ask us about our policy they are not willing or prepared to sit down across a table and tell us what policy they would approve for us in the council and would support it in the country, though they may be themselves not the Council-wallahs. At Juhu Panditji put before Mahatmaji a number of alternatives, but he would agree to none of them. He would not agree to address a good word to the country even in favour of his constructive work that we may do and accomplish in the councils. It follows, therefore, that our Council-policy is entirely our own affair and we shall manage it as best we can though unaided.

#### MAHARASHTRA ATTITUDE.

As for Maharashtra, it has been apparently both consistent and inconsistent with itself. And for this reason in 1920 every Maharashtra delegate to a man opposed the Council—boycott resolution, but as it was ultimately passed by the Congress and as it appeared that, Mahatmaji might come into trouble, if he did not get uniform support from the country, we agreed deliberately to carry out the boycott. But it was to be for a limited time only. We also did want to give the new programme a chance and a trial, though of course not a chance for Mahatmaji, for he needed none personally. But as soon as it appeared that Mahatmaji was thinking of making the boycotts permanent, Maharashtra was the first to protest against it. On the 1st of August of 1921, that is to say, within 10 months from the date of original boycott resolutions, I told Mahatmaji to his face—I would rather say, in his presence—my view at a meeting attended by ten thousand people before the Shaniwar Wada. I denied his allegation

that Maharashtra was without political faith, for without some kind of political faith, Maharashtra could not produce men like Ranade, Tilak and Gokhale. It was, of course, quite another thing if their faith was not the kind of faith which Gandhiji himself possessed. I told Mahatmaji that he should not blame Maharashtra for not visualising the expected results, but he should blame his own programme for it.

#### FOUR YEARS BEFORE.

We have consistently advocated the policy of Council-entry even from that time and it would be interesting to see that the latest rules and policy adopted by the Swarajya Party is very much in agreement with the policy outlined by late Lok. Tilak in the Congress Democratic Party's manifesto in 1920. The Swarajyists now in the Imperial Council for example, repeal all repressive legislation, secure trial by jury, abolish the rigour of imprisonment for political offences, secure the welfare of labouring classes, control the export and import of food-stuffs, promote Swadeshi and develop Indian industries by State subsidies and protective tariff, nationalise railways and secure preferential regulation of railway tariffs, effect retrenchment in expenditure, create citizen army, reduce non-Indian recruitment, secure Hindu-Moslem unity, re-adjust provinces and adopt Hindi as a *lingua franca*. The policy, therefore, of the Swarajyists of to-day is the same as that of the Nationalists four years ago and all this was quite natural.

#### M. MAHAMAD ALI.

Before concluding, I would just refer to the relations of the Swarajya Party to the Congress. And in this connection I would first deal with the recent utterances of M. Mahamad Ali who is the past president and the present head

of the Congress In a speech delivered at Lucknow on July 21st M Mahamad Ali has repeated only the parrot cry of following Mahatmaj But his speech lacks the backbone of conviction The old methods he said, of petitioning and protesting had been tried and found wanting Yes that is true But certainly that does not apply to the Swarajya Party for controlling the tariff legislation and throwing out the finance bill in the councils was certainly not empty protesting as of the old world *moder te* And as for petitioning, what do the Non co-operating Ali brothers themselves do when they apply to Government for passports and also submit to the humiliation of accepting all the imposed conditions ? If M Mahamad Ali would still support in the Congress my Passport Bill and help me to carry it out in the Council I can save him the disgrace of petitioning for the passport the next time he wants it But M Mahamad Ali goes further and actually says on the other hand that he was prepared to co-operate with Government or with any body for the right and just But is the supposed Responsive Co operation with Government intended for any thing not right or just ? In the same speech M Mahamad Ali criticised the exploded policy of throwing bombs You will find that this non violent Non-co-operator has given himself away for he is reported to have said that the old method of throwing bombs *which seldom hit the right persons* had been tried and found to be useless Now, gentlemen I have read the lines but I want you also to read between the lines By referring to the bombs-as missing their mark and hitting the wrong persons does not this apostle of non violence rather betray his regret at the bombs not hitting the right person than condemn the spirit of violence indicated by the bombs ? Evidently, M Mahamad Ali would have no objection to the bombs

if only they hit the right persons. And I say this deliberately because I know by instinct who is a really non-violent man and who is not. M. Mahomed Ali boasts of being a Mahomedan first and everything afterwards. And we all know what a tolerant religion Mahomedanism is! On the other hand I am sure and I can swear that even if you shake a man like M. Gandhi from his sleep or dreams a fatal parenthesis like the one used by M. Mahomed Ali shall never escape his lips for the simple reason that it does not exist in his consciousness.

#### THE FUTURE

Leaving M. Mahomed Ali aside I will say that the relations of the Swarajya Party to the Congress are and shall remain friendly or I shall say loyal if the expression friendly may sound patronising. Like the Congress Democratic Party of old the Swarajya Party is a party within the Congress. It shall not be driven out of the Congress. On the contrary, if I may hazard a prophecy I will say that if not at Belgium within a year or two the Swarajya Party is destined to capture the Congress. The conquest of the Congress is only a question of time for the "Swarajya Party."